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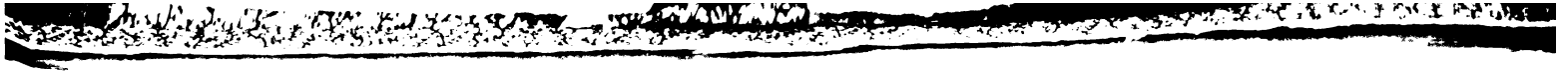

DR. JOHNSON'S TABLE-TALK;

CONTAINING

APHORISMS

ON

LITERATURE, LIFE, AND MANNERS;

WITH

ANECDOTES

OF

DISTINGUISHED PERSONS;

SELECTED AND ARRANGED

FROM

MR. BOSWELL's LIFE OF JOHNSON.

He that queſtioneth much ſhall learn much, and content much; but eſpecially if he apply his queſtions to the ſkill of the perſons whom he aſketh: for he ſhall give them occaſion to pleaſe themſelves in ſpeaking; and himſelf ſhall continually gather knowledge.

BACON'S ESSAYS.

London:

PRINTED FOR C. DILLY IN THE POULTRY.

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THE approbation beſtowed on BOSWELL'S Life of JOHNSON, *ſuggeſted the propriety of the ſelection now offered to the Public. The ſentiments of that great moraliſt and judge of human nature on various intereſting topics are here arranged and digeſted in a manner which it is hoped will prove agreeable to a numerous claſs of readers; thoſe, namely, who ſeek for inſtruction from works which they may take up or lay down at pleaſure, without interrupting the chain of an argument, or the circumſtances of a narration.*

Dr. JOHNSON'S *converſation poſſeſſed preciſely that excellence ſo well deſcribed by* LORD VERULAM *in a ſentence almoſt immediately preceding that which has been choſen for the motto to the Title Page of this work:—"It is good in diſcourſe and ſpeech of converſation (ſays his Lordſhip, in the quaint but expreſſive language of his age) to vary and intermingle ſpeech of the preſent occaſion with arguments; tales with reaſons; aſking of queſtions with telling of opinions; and jeſt with earneſt."*

In

ADVERTISEMENT.

In this compilation are contained ſeveral authentic anecdotes of diſtinguiſhed Literary Characters; rules for the conduct of life in the moſt ſerious and delicate conjunctures; and thoſe ſound remarks on works of genius and learning, which in a peculiar manner diſtinguiſhed the beloved friend of Mr. BOSWELL.

It may be proper to add, that this ſelection was undertaken in the life-time of Mr. BOSWELL, *and with his cordial approbation: had that gentleman lived, it might probably have been rendered more acceptable to the Reader.*

March 1798.

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TABLE TALK.

CONVERSATION.

JOHNSON'S uſual phraſe for converſation was *talk*; yet he made a diſtinction; for having once dined at a friend's houſe with what he termed "a very pretty company," and being aſked if there was good converſation, he anſwered, "No, Sir; we had *talk* enough, but no *converſation*; there was nothing *diſcuſſed*."

He had a great averſion to geſticulation in company, and called once to a gentleman who offended him in that point, "Don't *attitudeniſe*." When another gentleman thought he was giving additional force to what he uttered, by expreſſive movements of his hands, Johnſon fairly ſeized them, and held them down.

He alſo diſapproved of introducing ſcripture phraſes into ſecular diſcourſe.

Mr. Boſwell having on ſome occaſion obſerved, that he thought it right to tell one man

of a handſome thing which had been ſaid of him by another, as tending to increaſe benevolence, Johnſon anſwered, "Undoubtedly it is right, Sir."

He thus defined the difference between phyſical and moral truth: "Phyſical truth is, when you tell a thing as it actually is. Moral truth is, when you tell a thing ſincerely and preciſely as it appears to you. I ſay ſuch a one walked acroſs the ſtreet; if he really did ſo, I told a phyſical truth. If I thought ſo, though I ſhould have been miſtaken, I told a moral truth."

"A man," he ſaid, "ſhould be careful never to tell tales of himſelf to his own diſadvantage. People may be amuſed and laugh at the time; but they will be remembered, and brought out againſt him upon ſome ſubſequent occaſion."

At another time he obſerved, "A man cannot with propriety ſpeak of himſelf, except he relates ſimple facts; as, 'I was at Richmond:' or what depends on menſuration; as, 'I am ſix feet high.' He is ſure he has been at Richmond; he is ſure he is ſix feet high: but he cannot be ſure he is wiſe, or that he has any other excellence. Then, all cenſure of a man's ſelf is oblique praiſe. It is in order

to

to ſhew how much he can ſpare. It has all the invidiouſneſs of ſelf-praiſe, and all the reproach of falſehood." Mr. Boſwell however remarks, that this may ſometimes proceed from a man's ſtrong conſciouſneſs of his faults being obſerved. He knows that others would throw him down, and therefore he had better lie down ſoftly of his own accord.

Johnſon uſed alſo to ſay, that if a man *talked* of his misfortunes, we might depend upon it there was ſomething in them not diſagreeable to him—for where there was nothing but pure miſery, there never was any recourſe to the mention of it.

Talking of an acquaintance, whoſe narratives, which abounded in curious and intereſting topics, were unhappily found to be very fabulous, Mr. B. mentioned Lord Mansfield's having ſaid, "Suppoſe we believe one *half* of what he tells."—"Aye," ſaid Johnſon, "but we don't know *which* half to believe. By his lying we loſe not only our reverence for him, but all comfort in his converſation."

Speaking of converſation, he ſaid, "There muſt, in the firſt place, be knowledge, and there muſt be materials; in the ſecond place, there muſt be a command of words; in the third place, there muſt be imagination, to place things in ſuch views as they are not com-

monly ſeen in; and in the fourth place, there muſt be preſence of mind, and a reſolution that is not to be overcome by failures; this laſt is an eſſential requiſite; for want of it many people do not excel in converſation. Now I want it: I throw up the game upon loſing a trick*."

Of Charles Fox Johnſon ſaid, "Fox never talks in private company; not from any determination not to talk, but becauſe he has not the firſt motion. A man who is uſed to the applauſe of the Houſe of Commons has no wiſh for that of a private company. A man accuſtomed to throw for a thouſand pounds, if ſet down to throw for ſixpence, would not be at the pains to count his dice. Burke's talk is the ebullition of his mind; he does not talk from a deſire of diſtinction, but becauſe his mind is full."

After muſing for ſome time one day, Johnſon ſaid, "I wonder how I ſhould have any enemies; for I do harm to nobody."—BOSWELL. "In the firſt place, Sir, you will be pleaſed to

* "I wondered (ſays Mr. B.) to hear him talk thus of himſelf, and ſaid, 'I don't know, Sir, how this may be; but I am ſure you beat other people's cards out of their hands.' I doubt whether he heard this remark. While he went on talking triumphantly, I was fixed in admiration, and ſaid to Mrs. Thrale, 'O, for ſhort-hand to take this down!'—'You'll carry it all in your head (ſaid ſhe); a long head is as good as ſhort-hand."

recollect,

recollect, that you ſet out with attacking the Scotch; ſo you got a whole nation for your enemies."—JOHNSON. "Why, I own, that by my definition of *oats* I meant to vex them."—BOSWELL. "Pray, Sir, can you trace the cauſe of your antipathy to the Scotch?"—*J.* "I cannot, Sir."—*B.* "Old Mr. Sheridan ſays, it was becauſe they ſold Charles the Firſt."—*J.* "Then, Sir, old Mr. Sheridan found out a very good reaſon."

He once took occaſion to enlarge on the advantages of reading, and combated the idle ſuperficial notion, that knowledge enough may be acquired in converſation. "The foundation (ſaid he) muſt be laid by reading. General principles muſt be had from books, which, however, muſt be brought to the teſt of real life. In converſation you never get a ſyſtem. What is ſaid upon a ſubject is to be gathered from a hundred people: The parts of a truth which a man gets thus are at ſuch a diſtance from each other, that he never attains to a full view."

His acute obſervation of human life made him remark, "that there was nothing by which a man exaſperated moſt people more, than by diſplaying a ſuperior ability or brilliancy in converſation. They ſeem pleaſed at

the time; but their envy makes them curſe him in their hearts."

"Having once viſited him on a Good Friday (ſays Mr. B.), and finding that we inſenſibly fell into a train of ridicule upon the foibles of one of our friends, a very worthy man; I, by way of a check, quoted ſome good admonition from "The Government of the Tongue," that very pious book. It happened alſo remarkably enough, that the ſubject of the ſermon preached to us by Dr. Burrows, the rector of St. Clement Danes, was, the certainty that at the laſt day we muſt give an account of "the deeds done in the body;" and, amongſt various acts of culpability, he mentioned evil-ſpeaking. As we were moving ſlowly along in the croud from church, Johnſon jogged my elbow, and ſaid, "Did you attend to the ſermon?"—"Yes, Sir (ſaid I), it was very applicable to *us*." He, however, ſtood upon the defenſive.—"Why, Sir, the ſenſe of ridicule is given us, and may be lawfully uſed. The author of 'The Government of the Tongue' would have us treat all men alike."

"To be contradicted (he obſerved) in order to force you to talk, is mighty unpleaſing. You *ſhine*, indeed; but it is by being *ground*."

Mr.

Mr. Boſwell one day unguardedly ſaid to Dr. J. "I wiſh I could ſee you and Mrs. Macaulay together." He grew very angry; and, after a pauſe, while a cloud gathered on his brow, he burſt out, "No, Sir; you would not ſee us quarrel to make you ſport. Don't you know that it is very uncivil to *pit* two people againſt one another?" Then, checking himſelf, and wiſhing to be more gentle, he added, "I do not ſay you ſhould be hanged or drowned for this; but it *is* very uncivil." Dr. Taylor (who was preſent) thought him in the wrong, and ſpoke to him privately of it; "yet (ſays Mr. B.) I afterwards acknowledged to Johnſon that I was to blame; for I candidly owned, that I meant to expreſs a deſire to ſee a conteſt between Mrs. Macaulay and him; but then I knew how the conteſt would end; ſo that I was to ſee him triumph."—JOHNSON. "Sir, you cannot be ſure how a conteſt will end; and no man has a right to engage two people in a diſpute by which their paſſions may be inflamed, and they may part with bitter reſentment againſt each other. I would ſooner keep company with a man from whom I muſt guard my pockets, than with a man who contrives to bring me into a diſpute with ſomebody that he may hear it. This is the great

fault of ——, (naming one of our friends) endeavouring to introduce a ſubject upon which he knows two people in the company differ." —*B.* "But he told me, Sir, he does it for inſtruction."—*J.* "Whatever the motive be, Sir, the man who does ſo does very wrong. He has no more right to inſtruct himſelf at ſuch riſk, than he has to make two people fight a duel, that he may learn how to defend himſelf."

Mr. B. ventured to mention a ludicrous paragraph in the news-papers, that Dr. J. was learning to dance of Veſtris. Lord Charlemont, wiſhing to excite him to talk, propoſed in a whiſper, that he ſhould be aſked, whether it was true. "Shall I aſk him?" ſaid his Lordſhip. A great majority were for making the experiment. Upon which his Lordſhip very gravely, and with a courteous air, ſaid, "Pray, Sir, is it true that you are taking leſſons of Veſtris?" This was riſking a good deal, and required the boldneſs of a General of Iriſh Volunteers to make the attempt. Johnſon was at firſt ſtartled, and in ſome heat anſwered, "How can your Lordſhip aſk ſo ſimple a queſtion?" But immediately recovering himſelf, whether from unwillingneſs to be deceived, or to appear deceived, or whether from real good humour, he kept

kept up the joke: "Nay, but if any body were to anſwer the paragraph, and contradict it, I'd have a reply, and would ſay, that he who contradicted it was no friend either to Veſtris or me. For why ſhould not Dr. Johnſon add to his other powers a little corporeal agility? Socrates learnt to dance at an advanced age, and Cato learnt Greek at an advanced age. Then it might proceed to ſay, that this Johnſon, not content with dancing on the ground, might dance on the rope; and they might introduce the elephant dancing on the rope. A nobleman wrote a play, called 'Love in a Hollow Tree.' He found out that it was a bad one, and therefore wiſhed to buy up all the copies, and burn them. The Ducheſs of Marlborough had kept one; and when he was againſt her at an election, ſhe had a new edition of it printed, and prefixed to it, as a frontiſpiece, an elephant dancing on a rope; to ſhew, that his Lordſhip's writing comedy was as awkward as an elephant dancing on a rope."

Johnſon was, at a certain period of his life, a good deal with the Earl of Shelburne, now Marquis of Lanſdown.

Maurice Morgan, Eſq. author of the "Eſſay on the Character of Falſtaff," being a particular friend of his Lordſhip, had once an opportunity

portunity of entertaining Johnſon for a day or two at Wickham, when its Lord was abſent. One night, pretty late, Mr. Morgan and he had a diſpute in which Johnſon would not give up, though he had the wrong ſide, and in ſhort both kept the field. Next morning, when they met in the breakfaſting-room, Dr. J. with great candour, accoſted Mr. Morgan thus: "Sir, I have been thinking on our diſpute laſt night—*You were in the right.*"

Sir Joſhua Reynolds once obſerved to him, that he had talked above the capacity of ſome people with whom they had been in company together. "No matter, Sir (ſaid Johnſon), they conſider it as a compliment to be talked to as if they were wiſer than they are."

"There is nothing more likely to betray a man into abſurdity than *condeſcenſion*; when he ſeems to ſuppoſe his underſtanding too powerful for his company."

"No man (he uſed to ſay) ſpeaks concerning another, even ſuppoſing it to be in his praiſe, if he thinks he does not hear him, exactly as he would, if he thought he was within hearing."

"Never (ſaid he) ſpeak of a man in his own preſence. It is always indelicate, and may be offenſive."

Johnſon

Johnſon could not brook appearing to be worſted in argument, even when, to ſhow the force and dexterity of his talents, he had taken the wrong ſide. When, therefore, he perceived that his opponent gained ground, he had recourſe to ſome ſudden mode of robuſt ſophiſtry. Once when Mr. B. was preſſing upon him with viſible advantage, he ſtopped him thus: "My dear B. let's have no more of this; you'll make nothing of it. I'd rather have you whiſtle a Scotch tune."

Care, however, muſt be taken to diſtinguiſh between Johnſon when he "talked for victory," and Johnſon when he had no deſire but to inform and illuſtrate. "One of his principal talents (ſays an eminent friend of his) was ſhown in maintaining the wrong ſide of an argument, and in a ſplendid perverſion of the truth. If you could contrive to have his fair opinion on a ſubject, and without any bias from perſonal prejudice, or from a wiſh to be victorious in argument, it was wiſdom itſelf, not only convincing, but overpowering."

He had, however, all his life habituated himſelf to conſider converſation as a trial of intellectual vigour and ſkill; and to this may perhaps be aſcribed that unexampled richneſs and brilliancy which appeared in his own.

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As a proof at once of his eagerneſs for colloquial diſtinction, and his high notion of this eminent friend, he once addreſſed him thus: "We now have been ſeveral hours together, and you have ſaid but one thing for which I envied you."

He diſliked much all ſpeculative deſponding conſiderations, which tended to diſcourage men from diligence and exertion. He was in this like Dr. Shaw, the great traveller, who uſed to ſay, "I hate a *cui bono* man." Upon being aſked by a friend what he ſhould think of a man who was apt to ſay *non eſt tanti*? "That he's a ſtupid fellow, Sir (anſwered Johnſon). What would theſe *tanti* men be doing the while?" When one, in a low-ſpirited fit, was talking to him with indifference of the purſuits which generally engage us in a courſe of action, and inquiring a *reaſon* for taking ſo much trouble; "Sir, (ſaid he in an animated tone) it is driving on the ſyſtem of life."

Of his fellow collegian Mr. Edwards, with whom he had accidentally met after many years ſeparation, he ſaid, "Here is a man who has paſſed through life without experience: yet I would rather have him with me than a more ſenſible man who will not talk readily. This man is always willing to ſay what he has to ſay." Yet (ſays Mr. B.) Dr. J. had himſelf

himſelf by no means that willingneſs which he praiſed ſo much and ſo juſtly; for who has not felt the painful effect of the dreary void, when there is a total ſilence in a company for any length of time; or, which is as bad, or perhaps worſe, when the converſation is with difficulty kept up by a perpetual effort?

He related, that he had once in a dream a conteſt of wit with ſome other perſon, and that he was very much mortified by imagining that his opponent had the better of him. "Now (ſaid he) one may mark here the effect of ſleep in weakening the power of reflection; for had not my judgment failed me, I ſhould have ſeen, that the wit of this ſuppoſed antagoniſt, by whoſe ſuperiority I felt myſelf depreſſed, was as much furniſhed by me, as that which I thought I had been uttering in my own character."

Of a certain player he remarked, that his converſation uſually threatened and announced more than it performed; that he fed you with a continual renovation of hope, to end in a conſtant ſucceſſion of diſappointment.

When exaſperated by contradiction, he was apt to treat his opponents with too much acrimony; as, "Sir, you don't ſee your way through that queſtion:"—"Sir, you talk the language of ignorance." On its being obſerved

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to him, that a certain gentleman had remained ſilent the whole evening in the midſt of a very brilliant and learned ſociety, "Sir (ſaid he), the converſation overflowed and drowned him."

His philoſophy, though auſtere and ſolemn, was by no means moroſe and cynical, and never blunted the laudable ſenſibilities of his character, or exempted him from the influence of the tender paſſions. Want of tenderneſs, he always alledged, was want of parts, and was no leſs a proof of ſtupidity than depravity.

Of Goldſmith he ſaid, "He is ſo much afraid of being unnoticed, that he often talks merely leſt you ſhould forget that he is in company.—*B.* "Yes, he ſtands forward."—*J.* "True, Sir; but if a man is to ſtand forward, he ſhould wiſh to do it not in an aukward poſture, not in rags, not ſo as that he ſhall only be expoſed to ridicule."—*B.* "For my part, I like very well to hear honeſt Goldſmith talk away careleſsly."—*J.* "Why yes, Sir; but he ſhould not like to hear himſelf."

At another time he ſaid, "Goldſmith ſhould not be for ever attempting to ſhine in converſation: he has not temper for it; he is ſo much mortified when he fails. A game of jokes is compoſed partly of ſkill, partly of chance; a man

man may be beat at times by one who has not the tenth part of his wit. Now Goldſmith's putting himſelf againſt another, is like a man laying a hundred to one, who cannot ſpare the hundred. It is not worth a man's while. A man ſhould not lay a hundred to one, unleſs he can eaſily ſpare it, though he has a hundred chances for him: he can get but a guinea, and he may loſe a hundred. Goldſmith is in this ſtate. When he contends, if he gets the better, it is a very little addition to a man of his literary reputation: if he does not get the better, he is miſerably vexed. The misfortune of Goldſmith in converſation is this: he goes on without knowing how he is to get off. His genius is great, but his knowledge is ſmall. As they ſay of a generous man, it is a pity he is not rich; we may ſay of Goldſmith, it is a pity he is not knowing. He would not keep his knowledge to himſelf."

Goldſmith ſaid once to Dr. Johnſon, that he wiſhed for ſome additional members to the LITERARY CLUB, to give it an agreeable variety; "for (ſaid he), there can now be nothing new among us: we have travelled over one another's minds. Johnſon ſeemed a little angry, and ſaid, "Sir, you have not travelled over *my* mind, I promiſe you." Sir Joſhua Reynolds, however, thought Goldſmith right; obſerving, that

that "when people have lived a great deal t gether, they know what each of them will ſa on every ſubject. A new underſtanding, ther fore, is deſirable; becauſe though it may on furniſh the ſame ſenſe upon a queſtion whic would have been furniſhed by thoſe with who we are accuſtomed to live, yet this ſenſe wi have a different colouring; and colouring is much effect in every thing elſe as well as i painting."

Mr. Berrenger viſited Johnſon one day, an they talked of an evening ſociety for converſa tion at a houſe in town, of which (ſays Mr. B. we were all members, but of which Johnſon ſaic "It will never do, Sir. There is nothing ſerve about there, neither tea, nor coffee, nor lemo nade, nor any thing whatever; and depen upon it, Sir, a man does not like to go to place from whence he comes out exactly as h went in. Mr. B. endeavoured, for argument' ſake, to maintain, that men of learning and ta lents might have very good intellectual ſociety without the aid of any little gratifications of th ſenſes. Berrenger joined with Johnſon, an ſaid, that without theſe any meeting would b dull and inſipid. He would therefore hav all the ſlight refreſhments; nay, it would nc be amiſs to have ſome cold meat and a bottl of wine upon a ſide-board. "Sir (ſaid Johnſon

wil

with an air of triumph), Mr. Berrenger knows the world. Every body loves to have good things furniſhed to them without any trouble. I told Mrs. Thrale once, that as ſhe did not chooſe to have card-tables, ſhe ſhould have a profuſion of the beſt ſweetmeats, and ſhe would be ſure to have company enough come to her*"

One evening, in fine ſpirits, at the Eſſex-Head-Club, he ſaid, "I dined yeſterday at Mrs. Garrick's, with Mrs. Carter, Miſs Hannah More, and Miſs Fanny Burney. Three ſuch women are not to be found; I know not where I could find a fourth, except Mrs. Lennox, who is ſuperior to them all."—BOSWELL. "What! had you them all to yourſelf, Sir?"—JOHNSON. "I had them all, as much as they were had; but it might have been better had there been more company there." — *B.* "Might not Mrs. Montagu have been a fourth?"—*J.* "Sir, Mrs. Montagu does not make a trade of her wit; but Mrs. Montagu is a very extraordinary woman, ſhe has a conſtant ſtream of converſation, and it is always impregnated; it has always meaning."—*B.* "Mr. Burke has a conſtant ſtream of converſation."—*J.* "Yes, Sir: if a man were to go

* "I agreed with my illuſtrious friend upon this ſubject, (ſays his Biographer) for it has pleaſed GOD to make man a compoſite animal; and where there is nothing to refreſh the body, the mind will languiſh."

by chance at the ſame time with Burke unde a ſhed, to ſhun a ſhower, he would ſay thi is an extraordinary man. If Burke ſhoul go into a ſtable to ſee his horſe dreſt, the oſtle would ſay we have had an extraordinary ma here."—BOSWELL. Foote was a man wh never failed in converſation. If he had gon into a ſtable—"—JOHNSON. "Sir, if he ha gone into a ſtable, the oſtler would have ſai here has been a comical fellow; but he woul not have reſpected him.—*B.* "And, Si the oſtler would have anſwered him, woul have given him as good as he brought, as th common ſaying is."—*J.* "Yes, Sir; a Foote would have anſwered the oſtler."

Mr. Boſwell gave him an account of the e cellent mimickry of a friend of his in Scotlan obſerving, at the ſame time, that ſome peop thought it a very mean thing.—JOHNSO "Why, Sir, it is making a very mean uſe of man's powers. But to be a good mimick requir great powers; great acuteneſs of obſervatio great retention of what is obſerved, and gre pliancy of organs, to repreſent what is obſerve I remember a lady of quality in this town, wh was a wonderful mimick, and uſed to make m laugh immoderately. I have heard ſhe is no gone mad."—BOSWELL. "It is amazing h

a mimic can not only give you the geſtures and voice of a perſon whom he repreſents, but even what a perſon would ſay on any particular ſubject."—*J.* "Why, Sir, you are to conſider that the manner and ſome particular phraſes of a perſon do much to impreſs you with an idea of him, and you are not ſure that he would ſay what the mimick ſays in his character." —*B.* "I don't think Foote a good mimick, Sir."—*J.* "No, Sir; his imitations are not like. He gives you ſomething different from himſelf, but not the character which he means to aſſume. He goes out of himſelf, without going into other people. He cannot take off any perſon unleſs he is ſtrongly marked, ſuch as George Faulkner. He is like a painter who can draw the portrait of a man who has a wen upon his face, and who, therefore, is eaſily known. If a man hops upon one leg, Foote can hop upon one leg. But he has not that nice diſcrimination which your friend ſeems to poſſeſs. Foote is, however, very entertaining, with a kind of converſation between wit and buffoonery."

At another time he ſaid, "Garrick's gaiety of converſation has delicacy and elegance; Foote makes you laugh more: but Foote has the air of a buffoon paid for entertaining the company. He, indeed, well deſerves his hire."

Of Mr. Wilkes Johnſon one day ſaid, "Did we not hear ſo much ſaid of Jack Wilkes, we ſhould think more highly of his converſation. Jack has great variety of talk, Jack is a ſcholar, and Jack has the manners of a gentleman. But after hearing his name ſounded from pole to pole, as the phœnix of convivial felicity, we are diſappointed in his company. He has always been *at me*; but I would do Jack a kindneſs rather than not. The conteſt is now over."

"The value of every ſtory (he ſaid) depended on its being true. A ſtory is a picture either of an individual or of human nature in general: if it be falſe, it is a picture of nothing. For inſtance: ſuppoſe a man ſhould tell that Johnſon, before ſetting out for Italy, as he had to croſs the Alps, ſat down to make himſelf wings. This many people would believe; but it would be a picture of nothing. ******* (naming a worthy friend of ours) uſed to think a ſtory a ſtory, till I ſhewed him that truth was eſſential to it."

"Queſtioning (he once remarked) is not the mode of converſation among gentlemen. It is aſſuming a ſuperiority, and it is particularly wrong to queſtion a man concerning himſelf. There may be parts of his former life which he may not wiſh to be made known to other

perſons, or even brought to his own recollection."

Mr. Langton having repeated the anecdote of Addiſon having diſtinguiſhed between his powers in converſation and in writing, by ſaying, "I have only nine-pence in my pocket; but I can draw for a thouſand pounds, Johnſon ſaid, "He had not that retort ready, Sir; he had prepared it before hand."—LANGTON. (turning to Mr. Boſwell) "A fine ſurmiſe. Set a thief to catch a thief."

A gentleman who introduced his brother to Dr. Johnſon was earneſt to recommend him to the Doctor's notice, which he did by ſaying, "When we have ſat together ſome time, you'll find my brother grow very entertaining."—"Sir, (ſaid Johnſon) I can wait."

Mrs. Thrale one day gave high praiſe to a *Mr. Long.*—JOHNSON. "Nay, my dear Lady, don't talk ſo. Mr. Long's character is very *ſhort.* It is nothing. He fills a chair. He is a man of genteel appearance, and that is all. I know nobody who blaſts by praiſe as you do; for whenever there is exaggerated praiſe, every body is ſet againſt a character. They are provoked to attack it. Now there is *****; you praiſed that man with ſo much diſproportion, that I was incited to leſſen him, perhaps more than he deſerves. His blood is upon your head. By the ſame principle, your malice de-

feats itſelf; for your cenſure is too violer
And yet (looking to her with a leering ſmil
ſhe is the firſt woman in the world, could ſ
but reſtrain that wicked tongue of hers ;—ſ
would be the only woman, could ſhe but cor
mand that little whirligig."

Mrs. Thrale mentioned a gentleman wl
had acquired a fortune of four thouſand a yc
in trade, but was abſolutely miſerable becau
he could not talk in company. "I am a mc
unhappy man (ſaid he). I am invited to co
verſations ; I go to converſations ; but, alas !
have no converſation."—JOHNSON. "M
commonly cannot be ſucceſsful in different way
This gentleman has ſpent, in getting four tho
ſand pounds a year, the time in which he mig
have learned to talk ; and now he cannot talk
Mr. Perkins made a droll remark : "If he h
got his four thouſand a year as a mounteban
he might have learnt to talk at the ſame tin
that he was getting his fortune."

Some other gentlemen came in. The co
verſation concerning the perſon whoſe charact
Dr. Johnſon had treated ſo ſlightingly, as he d
not know his merit, was reſumed. Mrs. Thra
ſaid—"You think ſo of him, Sir, becauſe he
quiet, and does not exert himſelf with force.-
You'll be ſaying the ſame thing of Mr. ****
there, who ſits as quiet—" This was not we
bred

bred; and Johnſon did not let it paſs without correction. "Nay, Madam (ſaid he), what right have you to talk thus? Both Mr. ***** and I have reaſon to take it ill. *You* may talk ſo of Mr. *****, but why do you make *me* do it. Have I ſaid any thing againſt Mr. *****? You have *ſet* him, that I might ſhoot him: but I have not ſhot him."

Mr. Beauclerk had ſuch a propenſity to ſatire, that at one time Johnſon ſaid to him, "You never open your mouth but with intention to give pain; and you have often given me pain, not from the power of what you ſaid, but from ſeeing your intention." At another time applying to him, with a ſlight alteration, a line of Pope, he ſaid, "Thy love of folly, and thy ſcorn of fools—Every thing thou doſt ſhews the one, and every thing thou ſay'ſt the other." At another time he ſaid to him, "Thy body is all vice, and thy mind all virtue."

"Demoſthenes Taylor, as he was called (that is, the Editor of Demoſthenes)," ſaid Johnſon, "was the moſt ſilent man, the mereſt ſtatue of a man that I have ever ſeen. I once dined in company with him, and all he ſaid during the whole time was no more than *Richard.* How a man ſhould ſay only Richard, it is not eaſy to imagine. But it was thus: Dr. Douglas was talking of Dr. Zachary Grey, and aſcribing

to him ſomething that was written by Dr. Ri ard Grey; ſo to correct him, Taylor ſaid (i tating his affected ſententious emphaſis and n *Richard.*"

At another time, talking of oratory, M Wilkes, who was of the party, deſcribed i accompanied with all the charms of poeti expreſſion.—JOHNSON. "No, Sir; oratory the power of beating down your adverſary's guments, and putting better in their place WILKES. "But this does not move the p ſions."—JOHNSON. "He muſt be a we man who is to be ſo moved."—WILKES (na ing a celebrated orator). "Amidſt all t brilliancy of ——'s imagination, and the ex berance of his wit, there is a ſtrange want *taſte.* It was obſerved of Apelles's Venu that her fleſh ſeemed as if ſhe had been no riſhed by roſes: his oratory would ſometim make one ſuſpect that he eats potatoes a drinks whiſky."

"A celebrated wit being mentioned, Johnſo ſaid, "One may ſay of him as was ſaid of French wit, *Il n'a de l'eſprit que contre Dieu.* have been ſeveral times in company with hi but never perceived any ſtrong power of wi He produces a general effect by various means he has a cheerful countenance, and a gay voice Beſides, his trade is wit. It would be as wil

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in him to come into company without merriment, as for a highwayman to take the road without his piſtols."—"Has not —— a great deal of wit, Sir?"—JOHNSON. "I do not think ſo, Sir. He is, indeed, continually attempting wit, but he fails. And I have no more pleaſure in hearing a man attempting wit and failing, than in ſeeing a man trying to leap over a ditch and tumbling into it *."

A writer of deſerved eminence being mentioned, Johnſon ſaid, "Why, Sir, he is a man of good parts; but being originally poor, he has got a love of mean company and low jocularity; a very bad thing, Sir. To laugh is good, as to talk is good. But you ought no more to think it enough if you laugh, than you are to think it enough if you talk. You may laugh in as many ways as you talk; and ſurely *every* way of talking that is practiſed cannot be eſteemed."

One being named as a very learned man.—"Yes, Sir (ſaid Johnſon), he has a great deal of learning; but it never lies ſtraight.

* Garrick once remarked of the Doctor himſelf, "Rabelais and all other wits are nothing compared with him.—You may be diverted by them; but Johnſon gives you a forcible hug, and ſhakes laughter out of you, whether you will or no." Mrs. Thrale juſtly and wittily ſaid, that "Johnſon's converſation was much too ſtrong for a perſon accuſtomed to obſequiouſneſs and flattery; it was *muſtard in a young child's mouth.*"

There

There is never one idea by the ſide of another; 'tis all entangled; and then he drives it awkwardly upon converſation."

"People (he remarked) may be taken in once, who imagine that an author is greater in private life than other men. Uncommon parts require uncommon opportunities for their exertion. In barbarous ſociety, ſuperiority of parts is of real conſequence. Great ſtrength or great wiſdom is of much value to an individual. But in more poliſhed times there are people to do every thing for money: and then there are a number of other ſuperiorities, ſuch as thoſe of birth and fortune, and rank, that diſſipate mens' attention, and leave no extraordinary ſhare of reſpect for perſonal and intellectual ſuperiority. This is wiſely ordered by Providence, to preſerve ſome equality among mankind.

When Mr. B. one day complained of having dined at a ſplendid table without hearing one ſentence of converſation worthy of being remembered, he ſaid, "Sir, there ſeldom is any ſuch converſation."—BOSWELL. "Why then meet at table?"—JOHNSON. "Why to eat and drink together, and promote kindneſs; and, Sir, this is better done when there is no ſolid converſation; for when there is, people differ in opinion, and get into bad humour, or ſome of the company who are not capable of ſuch con-

converſation, are left out, and feel themſelves uneaſy."

An author of conſiderable eminence having engroſſed a good ſhare of a converſation, and having ſaid nothing but what was trifling and inſignificant, Johnſon, when he was gone, obſerved, "It is wonderful what a difference there ſometimes is between a man's powers of writing and of talking. ******* writes with great ſpirit, but is a poor talker; had he held his tongue we might have ſuppoſed him to have been reſtrained by modeſty: but he has ſpoken a great deal to-day, and you have heard what ſtuff it was."

Talking of an acquaintance diſtinguiſhed for knowing an uncommon variety of miſcellaneous articles both in antiquities and polite literature, he obſerved, "You know, Sir, he runs about with little weight upon his mind." And talking of another very ingenious gentleman, who from the warmth of his temper was at variance with many of his acquaintance, and wiſhed to avoid them, he ſaid, "Sir, he leads the life of an outlaw."

Being irritated by hearing a gentleman aſk Mr. Levett a variety of queſtions concerning him when he was ſitting by, he broke out, "Sir, you have but two topics, yourſelf and me. I am ſick of both."—"A man (ſaid he) ſhould not

not talk of himſelf, nor much of any particular perſon. He ſhould take care not to be made a proverb; and therefore ſhould avoid having any one topick of which people can ſay, 'We ſhall hear him upon it.' There was a Dr. Oldfield, who was always talking of the Duke of Marlborough; he came into a coffee-houſe one day, and told that his Grace had ſpoken in the Houſe of Lords for half an hour. "Did he indeed ſpeak for half an hour?' (ſaid Belchier, the ſurgeon;) 'Yes.' 'And what did he ſay of Dr. Oldfield?' 'Nothing.' 'Why then, Sir, he was very ungrateful; for Dr. Oldfield could not have ſpoken for a quarter of an hour without ſaying ſomething of him.'

One evening, in company, an ingenious and learned gentleman read a letter of compliment which he had received from one of the Profeſſors of a Foreign Univerſity. Johnſon, in an irritable fit, thinking there was too much oſtentation, ſaid, "I never receive any of theſe tributes of applauſe from abroad. One inſtance I recollect of a foreign publication, in which mention is made of *l'illuſtre Lockman.*"

A learned gentleman, who in the courſe of converſation wiſhed to inform the company of this ſimple fact, that the Counſel upon the circuit at Shrewſbury were much bitten by fleas, took ſeven or eight minutes in relating it circum

cumſtantially. He in a plentitude of phraſe told, that large bales of woollen cloth were lodged in the town-hall; that, by reaſon of this, fleas neſtled there in prodigious numbers; that the lodgings of the Counſel were near the town-hall; and that thoſe little animals moved from place to place with wonderful agility.—Johnſon ſat in great impatience till the gentleman had finiſhed his tedious narrative, and then burſt out (playfully however), "It is a pity, Sir, that you have not ſeen a lion; for a flea has taken you ſuch a time, that a lion muſt have ſerved you a twelvemonth."

A dull country magiſtrate once gave Johnſon a long tedious account of his exerciſing his criminal juriſdiction, the reſult of which was his having ſentenced four convicts to tranſportation. Johnſon, in an agony of impatience to get rid of ſuch a companion, exclaimed, "I heartily wiſh, Sir, that I were a fifth."

At another time, having argued at ſome length with a pertinacious gentleman, his opponent, who had talked in a very puzzling manner, happened to ſay, "I don't underſtand you, Sir;" upon which Johnſon obſerved, "Sir, I have found you an argument; but I am not obliged to find you an underſtanding."

He

Johnſon had a kind of general averſion to a pun. "He once, however (ſays Mr. B.), endured one of mine. When we were talking of a numerous company in which he had diſtinguiſhed himſelf highly, I ſaid, 'Sir, you were a Cod ſurrounded by ſmelts. Is not this enough for you? at a time too when you were not *fiſhing* for a compliment?' He laughed at this with a complacent approbation. Old Mr. Sheridan obſerved, upon my mentioning it to him, 'He liked your compliment ſo well, he was willing to take it with *pun ſauce*.' For my own part (adds Mr. B.), I think no innocent ſpecies of wit or pleaſantry ſhould be ſuppreſſed; and that a good pun may be admitted among the ſmaller excellencies of lively converſation."

The Reader will probably be ſurpriſed to hear, that the great Dr. Johnſon could amuſe himſelf with ſo ſlight and playful a ſpecies of compoſition as a *Charade*. The following, however, he made on Dr. *Barnard*, now Lord Biſhop of Killaloe.

CHARADE.

"My *firſt*[1] ſhuts out thieves from your houſe or your room,
"My *ſecond*[2] expreſſes a Syrian perfume.
"My *whole*[3] is a man in whoſe converſe is ſhar'd
"The ſtrength of a Bar and the ſweetneſs of Nard."

INDULGENCE IN WINE.

MR. BOSWELL one evening ventured to undertake the defence of convivial indulgence in wine. After urging the common plauſible topicks, he at laſt had recourſe to the maxim, *in vino veritas*; a man who is well warmed with wine will ſpeak truth. "Why, Sir (ſaid Johnſon), that may be an argument for drinking, if you ſuppoſe men in general to be liars. But, Sir, I would not keep company with a fellow who lies as long as he is ſober, and whom you muſt make drunk before you can get a word of truth out of him."

He ſaid, few people had intellectual reſources ſufficient to forego the pleaſures of wine. They could not otherwiſe contrive how to fill the interval between dinner and ſupper.

A gentleman having to ſome of the uſual arguments for drinking added this: "You

[1] Bar. [2] Nard. [3] Barnard.

 know

know, Sir, drinking drives away care, and makes us forget whatever is diſagreeable. Would not you allow a man to drink for that reaſon?"—"Yes, Sir (ſaid Johnſon, with perhaps unneceſſary ſeverity), if he ſat next *you*."

In a party at Sir Joſhua Reynolds's, the queſtion was diſcuſſed, whether drinking improved converſation and benevolence. Sir Joſhua maintained it did.—*J.* "No, Sir: before dinner men meet with great inequality of underſtanding; and thoſe who are conſcious of their inferiority have the modeſty not to talk. When they have drunk wine, every man feels himſelf happy, and loſes that modeſty, and grows impudent and vociferous: but he is not improved; he is only not ſenſible of his defects." Sir Joſhua ſaid, the Doctor was talking of the effects of exceſs in wine; but that a moderate glaſs enlivened the mind, by giving a proper circulation to the blood. "I am (ſaid he) in very good ſpirits when I get up in the morning. By dinner-time I am exhauſted; wine puts me in the ſame ſtate as when I got up; and I am ſure that moderate drinking makes people talk better."—*J.* "No, Sir; wine gives not light, gay, ideal hilarity; but tumultuous, noiſy, clamorous merriment. I have heard none of thoſe drunken,—

drunken,—nay, drunken is a coarſe word,—none of thoſe *vinous* flights."—SIR JOSHUA. "Becauſe you have ſat by, quite ſober, and felt an envy of the happineſs of thoſe who were drinking."—*J.* "Perhaps, contempt: And, Sir, it is not neceſſary to be drunk one's ſelf, to reliſh the wit of drunkenneſs. Do we not judge of the drunken wit of the dialogue between Iago and Caſſio, the moſt excellent in it's kind, when we are quite ſober? Wit is wit, by whatever means it is produced; and, if good, will appear ſo at all times. I admit that the ſpirits are raiſed by drinking, as by the common participation of any pleaſure: cock-fighting, or bear-baiting, will raiſe the ſpirits of a company, as drinking does, though ſurely they will not improve converſation. I alſo admit, that there are ſome ſluggiſh men who are improved by drinking; as there are fruits which are not good till they are rotten. There are ſuch men, but they are medlars. I indeed allow that there have been a very few men of talents who were improved by drinking; but I maintain that I am right as to the effects of drinking in general; and let it be conſidered, that there is no poſition, however falſe in its univerſality, which is not true of ſome particular man."—Sir William Forbes ſaid, "Might not a man warmed with wine

be like a bottle of beer, which is made brisker by being ſet before the fire?"—"Nay (ſaid Johnſon, laughing), I cannot anſwer that—that is too much for me."—Mr. Boſwell obſerved, "that wine did ſome people harm, by inflaming, confuſing, and irritating their minds; but that the experience of mankind had declared in favour of moderate drinking."—*J.* "Sir, I do not ſay it is wrong to produce ſelf-complacency by drinking; I only deny that it improves the mind. When I drank wine, I ſcorned to drink it when in company. I have drunk many a bottle by myſelf; in the firſt place, becauſe I had need of it to raiſe my ſpirits; in the ſecond place, becauſe I would have nobody to witneſs its effects upon me."

On another occaſion, talking of the effects of drinking, he ſaid, "Drinking may be practiſed with great prudence; a man who expoſes himſelf when he is intoxicated has not the art of getting drunk; a ſober man, who happens occaſionally to get drunk, readily enough goes into a new company, which a man who has been drinking ſhould never do. Such a man will undertake any thing; he is without ſkill in inebriation. I uſed to ſlink home when I had drunk too much. A man accuſtomed to ſelf-examination will be conſcious

ſcious when he is drunk, though an habitual drunkard will not be conſcious of it. I knew a phyſician who for twenty years was not ſober; yet in a pamphlet which he wrote upon fevers he appealed to Garrick and me for his vindication from a charge of drunkenneſs. A bookſeller (naming him) who got a large fortune by trade, was ſo habitually and equably drunk, that his moſt intimate friends never perceived that he was more ſober at one time than another."

He once gave the following very judicious practical advice upon the ſubject: "A man who has been drinking wine at all freely ſhould never go into a new company. With thoſe who have partaken of wine with him, he may be pretty well in uniſon; but he will probably be offenſive, or appear ridiculous, to other people."

At another time being at Sir Joſhua Reynolds's, Johnſon harangued upon the qualities of different liquors; and ſpoke with great contempt of claret, as ſo weak, "that a man would be drowned by it before it made him drunk." He was perſuaded to drink one glaſs of it, that he might judge, not from recollection, which might be dim, but from immediate ſenſation. He ſhook his head, and ſaid, "Poor ſtuff! No, Sir, claret is the liquor

for boys; port for men; but he who aſpires to be a hero (ſmiling) muſt drink brandy. In the firſt place, the flavour of brandy is moſt grateful to the palate; and then brandy will do ſooneſt for a man what drinking *can* do for him. There are, indeed, few who are able to drink brandy. That is a power rather to be wiſhed for than attained. And yet (proceeded he) as in all pleaſure hope is a conſiderable part, I know not but fruition comes too quick by brandy. Florence wine I think the worſt; it is wine only to the eye; it is wine neither while you are drinking it, nor after you have drunk it; it neither pleaſes the taſte, nor exhilarates the ſpirit." "I reminded him (ſays Mr. B.) how heartily he and I uſed to drink wine together when we were firſt acquainted, and how I uſed to have a head-ache after ſitting up with him. He did not like to have this recalled, or perhaps, thinking that I boaſted improperly, reſolved to have a witty ſtroke at me:—"Nay, Sir, it was not the *wine* that made your head ache, but the *ſenſe* that I put into it."—*B.* "What, Sir, will ſenſe make the head ache?"—*J.* "Yes, Sir (with a ſmile), when it is not uſed to it." "No man (adds Mr. B.) who has a true reliſh of pleaſantry could be offended at this; eſpecially if Johnſon in a long intimacy had

had given him repeated proofs of his regard and good eſtimation. I uſed to ſay, that as he had given me a thouſand pounds in praiſe, he had a good right now and then to take a guinea from me."—*J.* "I require wine only when I am alone. I have then often wiſhed for it, and often taken it."—"What, (ſaid Mr. Spottiſwoode, the Solicitor, who was preſent) by way of a companion, Sir?"—*J.* "To get rid of myſelf, to ſend myſelf away. Wine gives great pleaſure; and every pleaſure is of itſelf a good. It is a good, unleſs counterbalanced by evil. A man may have a ſtrong reaſon not to drink wine; and that may be greater than the pleaſure. Wine makes a man better pleaſed with himſelf. I do not ſay that it makes him more pleaſing to others. Sometimes it does. But the danger is, that while a man grows better pleaſed with himſelf, he may be growing leſs pleaſing to others. Wine gives a man nothing. It neither gives him knowledge nor wit; it only animates a man, and enables him to bring out what a dread of the company has repreſſed. It only puts in motion what has been locked up in froſt. But this may be good, or it may be bad."—SPOTTISWOODE. "So, Sir, wine is a key which opens a box; but this box may be either full or empty."—JOHNSON.

SON. "Nay, Sir, converſation is the key: wine is a pick-lock which forces open the box and injures it. A man ſhould cultivate his mind ſo as to have that confidence and readineſs without wine which wine gives." —*B.* "The great difficulty of reſiſting wine is from benevolence. For inſtance, a good worthy man aſks you to taſte his wine which he has had twenty years in his cellar." —*J.* "Sir, all this notion about benevolence ariſes from a man's imagining himſelf to be of more importance to others than he really is. They don't care a farthing whether he drinks wine or not."—SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS. "Yes, they do for the time."—*J.* "For the time! If they care this minute, they forget it the next. And as for the good worthy man; how do you know he is good and worthy? No good and worthy man will inſiſt upon another man's drinking wine. As to the wine twenty years in the cellar—of ten men, three ſay this merely becauſe they muſt ſay ſomething; three are telling a lie when they ſay they have had the wine twenty years; three would rather ſave the wine;—one perhaps cares. I allow it is ſomething to pleaſe one's company; and people are always pleaſed with thoſe who partake pleaſure with them. But after a man has brought himſelf to relinquiſh

quiſh the great perſonal pleaſure which ariſes from drinking wine, any other conſideration is a trifle. To pleaſe others by drinking wine is ſomething only if there be nothing againſt it. I ſhould, however, be ſorry to offend worthy men:

> Curſt be the verſe, how well ſo e'er it flow,
> That tends to make one worthy man my foe."

—*B.* "Curſt be the *ſpring*, the *water*." —*J.* "But let us conſider what a ſad thing it would be if we were obliged to drink or do any thing elſe that may happen to be agreeable to the company where we are." —LANGTON. "By the ſame rule you muſt join with a gang of cut-purſes."—*J.* "Yes, Sir: but yet we muſt do juſtice to wine; we muſt allow it the power it poſſeſſes. To make a man pleaſed with himſelf, let me tell you, is doing a very great thing."

Some time after this Johnſon again harangued againſt drinking wine: "A man (ſaid he) may chooſe whether he will have abſtemiouſneſs and knowledge, or claret and ignorance." Dr. Robertſon (who was very companionable) was beginning to diſſent as to the proſcription of claret. *J.* (with a placid ſmile) "Nay, Sir, you ſhall not differ with me; as I have ſaid that the man is moſt perfect who takes in the moſt things, I am for knowledge and claret."

Mr.

"Mr. Eliot (ſays Mr. B.) mentioned a curious liquor peculiar to his country, which the Corniſh fiſhermen drink. They call it *mahogany*; and it is made of two parts gin and one part treacle, well beaten together. I begged to have ſome of it made, which was done with proper ſkill by Mr. Eliot. I thought it very good liquor; and ſaid it was a counterpart of what is called *Athol porridge* in the Highlands of Scotland, which is a mixture of whiſkey and honey." *J.* ſaid, "that muſt be a better liquor than the Corniſh, for both its component parts are better." He alſo obſerved, "*Mahogany* muſt be a modern name, for it is not long ſince the wood called mahogany was known in this country." I mentioned his ſcale of liquors: claret for boys—port for men—brandy for heroes. "Then (ſaid Mr. Burke) let me have claret: I love to be a boy; to have the careleſs gaiety of boyiſh days."—*J.* "I ſhould drink claret too if it would give me that—but it does not; it neither makes boys men, nor men boys. You'll be drowned by it before it has any effect upon you."

Talking of a man's reſolving to deny himſelf the uſe of wine from moral and religious conſiderations, he ſaid, "He muſt not doubt about it. When one doubts as to pleaſure we know what will be the concluſion. I now no more think

think of drinking wine than a horſe does. The wine upon the table is no more for me than for the dog that is under the table. Yet (added he) I did not leave off wine becauſe I could not bear it; I have drunk three bottles of port without being the worſe for it.—Univerſity College has witneſſed this."—*B.* "Why then, Sir, did you leave it off?"—*J.* "Why, Sir, becauſe it is ſo much better for a man to be ſure that he is never to be intoxicated, never to loſe the power over himſelf. I ſhall not begin to drink wine again till I grow old and want it."—*B.* "I think, Sir, you once ſaid to me, that not to drink wine was a great deduction from life."—*J.* "It is a diminution of pleaſure, to be ſure; but I do not ſay a diminution of happineſs. There is more happineſs in being rational."—*B.* "But if we could have pleaſure always ſhould not we be happy?—the greateſt part of men would compound for pleaſure."—*J.* "Suppoſing we could have pleaſure always, an intellectual man would not compound for it. The greateſt part of men would compound, becauſe the greateſt part of men are groſs." *B.* "I allow there may be greater pleaſure than from wine. I have had more pleaſure from your converſation. I have indeed; I aſſure you I have."—*J.* When

we talk of pleaſure we mean ſenſual pleaſure. Philoſophers tell you, that pleaſure is *contrary* to happineſs. Groſs men prefer animal pleaſure: So there are men who have preferred living among ſavages. Now what a wretch muſt he be who is content with ſuch converſation as can be had among ſavages!"

"Dr. Johnſon (ſays Mr. B.) recommended me to drink water only: "For (ſaid he) you are then ſure not to get drunk; whereas if you drink wine you are never ſure." He however owned, that in his opinion a free uſe of wine did not ſhorten life; and ſaid, he would not give leſs for the life of a certain Scotch lord (whom he named) celebrated for hard drinking, than for that of a ſober man. "But ſtay (ſaid he with his uſual intelligence and accuracy of enquiry), does it take much wine to make him drunk?"—I anſwered, "a great deal either of wine or ſtrong punch."—"Then (ſaid he) that is the worſe." Mr. Boſwell illuſtrates his friend's obſervation thus: "A fortreſs, which ſoon ſurrenders, has its walls leſs ſhattered than when a long and obſtinate reſiſtance is made."

Finding him ſtill perſevering in his abſtinence from wine, a friend ventured to ſpeak to him of it.—*J.* "Sir, I have no objection to a man's drinking wine if he can

do it in moderation. I found myſelf apt to go to exceſs in it, and therefore, after having been for ſome time without it on account of illneſs, I thought it better not to return to it. Every man is to judge for himſelf according to the effects which he experiences. One of the fathers tells us, he found faſting made him ſo peeviſh that he did not practiſe it."

Though he often enlarged upon the evil of intoxication he was by no means harſh and unforgiving to thoſe who indulged in occaſional exceſs in wine. One of his friends came to ſup at a tavern with him and ſome other gentlemen, and too plainly diſcovered that he had drunk too much at dinner. When one who loved miſchief, thinking to produce a ſevere cenſure, aſked Johnſon, a few days afterwards, "Well, Sir, what did your friend ſay to you as an apology for being in ſuch a ſituation?"— Johnſon anſwered, "Sir, he ſaid all that a man *ſhould* ſay—he ſaid he was ſorry for it."

"I was at one time (ſays Mr. B.) myſelf a water-drinker upon trial by Johnſon's recommendation; and my friend obſerved, "Boſwell is a bolder combatant than Sir Joſhua: he argues for wine without the help of wine; but Sir Joſhua with it."—Sir Joshua Reynolds (who was of the party), "But to pleaſe one's company

company is a ſtrong motive."—*J.* (who from drinking only water ſuppoſed every body who drank wine to be elevated), "I won't argue any more with you, Sir. You are too far gone."—SIR JOSHUA. "I ſhould have thought ſo indeed, Sir, had I made ſuch a ſpeech as you have now done."—JOHNSON. (drawing himſelf in, and bluſhing), "Nay, don't be angry. I did not mean to offend you."—SIR *J.* "At firſt the taſte of wine was diſagreeable to me; but I brought myſelf to drink it that I might be like other people. The pleaſure of drinking wine is ſo connected with pleaſing your company, that altogether there is ſomething of ſocial goodneſs in it."—*J.* "Sir, this is only ſaying the ſame thing over again."—*Sir J.* "No, this is new."—*J.* "You put it in new words, but it is an old thought. This is one of the diſadvantages of wine. It makes a man miſtake words for thoughts."—*B.* "I think it is a new thought, at leaſt it is in a new attitude."—*J.* "Nay, Sir, it is only in a new coat; or an old coat with a new facing. It is *(laughing heartily)*, the old dog in a new doublet. An extraordinary inſtance, however, may occur where a man's patron will do nothing for him unleſs he will drink: *there* may be a good reaſon for drinking."

Mr.

Mr. Boſwell mentioned a nobleman who he believed was really uneaſy if his company would not drink hard.—JOHNSON. "That is from having had people about him whom he has been accuſtomed to command."—BOSWELL. "Suppoſing I ſhould be *tête-à-tête* with him at table."—*J.* Sir, there is no more reaſon for your drinking with *him*, than his being ſober with *you*."—*B.* "Why that is true; for it would do him leſs hurt to be ſober than it would do me to get drunk."—*J.* "Yes, Sir; and from what I have heard of him one would not wiſh to ſacrifice himſelf to ſuch a man. If he muſt always have ſomebody to drink with him he ſhould buy a ſlave, and then he would be ſure to have it. They who ſubmit to drink as another pleaſes make themſelves his ſlaves."—*B.* "But, Sir, you will ſurely make allowance for the duty of hoſpitality.—A gentleman who loves drinking comes to viſit me."—*J.* "Sir, a man knows whom he viſits; he comes to the table of a ſober man."—*B.* "But, Sir, you and I ſhould not have been ſo well received in the Highlands and Hebrides if I had not drunk with our worthy friends. Had I drunk water only, as you did, they would not have been ſo cordial."—*J.* "Sir William Temple mentions,

mentions, that in his travels through the Netherlands he had two or three gentlemen with him, and when a bumper was neceſſary he put it on *them*. Were I to travel again through the iſlands I would have Sir Joſhua with me to take the bumpers."—*B.* "But, Sir, let me put a caſe: Suppoſe Sir Joſhua ſhould take a jaunt into Scotland; he does me the honour to pay me a viſit at my houſe in the country; I am overjoyed at ſeeing him; we are quite by ourſelves; ſhall I unſociably and churliſhly let him ſit drinking by himſelf? No, no, my dear Sir Joſhua, you ſhall not be treated ſo, I *will* take a bottle with you."

MARRIAGE.

To Mr. Boſwell on the eve of marriage Johnſon ſaid, "Now that you are going to marry, do not expect more from life than life will afford. You may often find yourſelf out of humour, and you may often think your wife not ſtudious enough to pleaſe you; and yet you may have reaſon to conſider yourſelf as upon the whole very happily married."

Of

Of marriage in general, he obſerved, "Our marriage ſervice is too refined: It is calculated only for the beſt kind of marriages; whereas we ſhould have a form for matches of convenience, of which there are many."

At General Paoli's, a queſtion was one day ſtarted, whether the ſtate of marriage was natural to man.—JOHNSON. "Sir, it is ſo far from being natural for a man and woman to live in a ſtate of marriage, that we find all the motives which they have for remaining in that connection, and the reſtraints which civilized ſociety impoſes to prevent ſeparation, are hardly ſufficient to keep them together." The General ſaid, that in a ſtate of nature a man and woman uniting together, would form a ſtrong and conſtant affection, by the mutual pleaſure each would receive; and that the ſame cauſes of diſſention would not ariſe between them, as occur between huſband and wife in a civilized ſtate.—*J.* "Sir, they would have diſſentions enough, though of another kind. One would chooſe to go a hunting in this wood, the other in that; one would chooſe to go a fiſhing in this lake, the other in that; or, perhaps, one would chooſe to go a hunting when the other would chooſe to go a fiſhing; and ſo they would part. Beſides, Sir, a ſavage man and a ſavage woman meet by chance; and when the man ſees

another woman that pleaſes him better, he will leave the firſt."

Yet he well obſerved, "Marriage is the beſt ſtate for a man in general; and every man is a worſe man, in proportion as he is unfit for the married ſtate.

"Marriage is much more neceſſary to a man than to a woman; for he is much leſs able to ſupply himſelf with domeſtic comforts. You (addreſſing Mr. Boſwell) will recollect my ſaying to ſome ladies the other day, that I had often wondered why young women ſhould marry, as they have ſo much more freedom, and ſo much more attention paid to them while unmarried, than when married."

He one day remarked, that it was commonly a weak man who married for love. Some one then talked of marrying a woman of fortune; and mentioned a common remark, that a man may be, upon the whole, richer by marrying a woman with a very ſmall portion, becauſe a woman of fortune will be proportionally expenſive; whereas a woman who brings none will be very moderate in expences.—JOHNSON. "Depend upon it, Sir, this is not true. A woman of fortune, being uſed to the handling of money, ſpends it judiciouſly; but a woman who gets the command of money for the firſt time upon her marriage, has ſuch a guſt in ſpending it, that ſhe throws it away with great profuſion."

A per-

A perſon was mentioned as having reſolved never to marry a pretty woman. Johnſon ſaid, "Sir, it is a very fooliſh reſolution not to marry a pretty woman. Beauty is of itſelf very eſtimable. No, Sir, I would prefer a pretty woman, unleſs there were objections to her. A pretty woman may be fooliſh; a pretty woman may be wicked; a pretty woman may not like me. But there is no ſuch danger in marrying a pretty woman as is apprehended; ſhe will not be perſecuted if ſhe does not invite perſecution. A pretty woman, if ſhe has a mind to be wicked, can find a readier way than another; and that is all."

Being aſked if he did not ſuppoſe that there were fifty women in the world, with any one of whom a man might be as happy, as with any one woman in particular, he ſaid, "Aye, Sir, fifty thouſand."—BOSWELL. "Then, Sir, you are not of opinion with ſome, who imagine that certain men and certain women are made for each other; and that they cannot be happy if they miſs their counterparts."—J. "To be ſure not, Sir. I believe marriages would in general be as happy, and often more ſo, if they were all made by the Lord Chancellor upon a due conſideration of characters and circumſtances, without the parties having any choice in the matter."

A gentleman being cenſured for marrying a ſecond time, as it ſhewed a diſregard of his firſt wife, he ſaid, "Not at all. On the contrary, were he not to marry again, it might be concluded that his firſt wife had given him a diſguſt to marriage; but by taking a ſecond wife he pays the higheſt compliment to the firſt, by ſhewing that ſhe made him ſo happy as a married man, that he wiſhes to be ſo a ſecond time."—So ingenious a turn did he give to this delicate queſtion. And yet, on another occaſion, he owned, that he once had almoſt aſked a promiſe of Mrs. Johnſon that ſhe would not marry again, but he checked himſelf.

He obſerved upon the marriage of ſome one, "He has done a fooliſh thing; he has married a widow, when he might have had a maid."

A gentleman, who had been very unhappy in marriage, married immediately after his wife died; Johnſon ſaid, it was the triumph of hope over experience.

He obſerved, that a man of ſenſe and education ſhould meet a ſuitable companion in a wife. It was a miſerable thing when the converſation could only be ſuch as, whether the mutton ſhould be boiled or roaſted, and probably a diſpute about that.

He

He did not approve of late marriages, obſerving, that more was loſt in point of time, than compenſated for by any poſſible advantages.—Even ill aſſorted marriages were preferable to cheerleſs celibacy.

One remark he made, of ſuch moment to the rational conduct of a man in the decline of life, that it deſerves to be imprinted upon every mind: "There is nothing againſt which an old man ſhould be ſo much upon his guard as putting himſelf to nurſe. Innumerable have been the melancholy inſtances of men once diſtinguiſhed for firmneſs, reſolution, and ſpirit, who in their latter days have been governed like children by intereſted female artifice."

When a gentleman one day told him he had bought a ſuit of lace for his lady. He ſaid, "Well, Sir, you have done a good thing and a wiſe thing." "I have done a good thing (ſaid the gentleman), but I do not know that I have done a wiſe thing."—JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir; no money is better ſpent than what is laid out for domeſtic ſatisfaction. A man is pleaſed that his wife is dreſt as well as other people; and a wife is pleaſed that ſhe is dreſt."

Talking of a young gentleman's marriage with an eminent ſinger, and his determination that ſhe ſhould no longer ſing in public, though his father was very earneſt ſhe ſhould, becauſe

her talents would be liberally rewarded, ſo as to make her a good fortune, it was queſtioned whether the young gentleman, who had not a ſhilling in the world, but was bleſt with very uncommon talents, was not fooliſhly delicate, or fooliſhly proud, and his father truly rational without being mean. Johnſon, with all the high ſpirit of a Roman ſenator, exclaimed, "He reſolved wiſely and nobly to be ſure. He is a brave man. Would not a gentleman be diſgraced by having his wife ſinging publickly for hire? No, Sir, there can be no doubt here. I know not if I ſhould not prepare myſelf for a public ſinger, as readily as let my wife be one."

A young lady who had married a man much her inferior in rank being mentioned, a queſtion aroſe how a woman's relations ſhould behave to her in ſuch a ſituation. While one contended that ſhe ought to be treated with an inflexible ſteadineſs of diſpleaſure, Mrs. Thrale was all for mildneſs and forgiveneſs, and, according to the vulgar phraſe, "making the beſt of a bad bargain." Johnſon ſaid, "Madam, we muſt diſtinguiſh. Were I a man of rank, I would not let a daughter ſtarve who had made a mean marriage; but having voluntarily degraded herſelf from the ſtation which ſhe was originally entitled to hold, I would ſupport her only in that

that which ſhe herſelf had choſen; and would not put her on a level with my other daughters. You are to conſider, Madam, that it is our duty to maintain the ſubordinition of civilized ſociety; and when there is a groſs and ſhameful deviation from rank, it ſhould be puniſhed ſo as to deter others from the ſame perverſion *."

A gentleman talked to him of a lady whom he greatly admired and wiſhed to marry, but was afraid of her ſuperiority of talents. "Sir (ſaid he), you need not be afraid; marry her. Before a year goes about, you'll find her reaſon much weaker, and her wit not ſo bright." Yet the gentleman may be juſtified in his apprehenſion by one of Dr. Johnſon's admirable ſentences in his life of

* "After frequently conſidering this ſubject (ſays Mr. B), I am more and more confirmed in what I then meant to expreſs, and which was ſanctioned by the authority, and illuſtrated by the wiſdom of Johnſon; and I think it of the utmoſt conſequence to the happineſs of ſociety, to which ſubordination is abſolutely neceſſary. It is weak [illegible] contemptible, and unworthy in a parent, to rel[illegible] ſuch a caſe. It is ſacrificing general advantage to private feelings. And let it be conſidered, that the claim of a daughter who has acted thus, to be reſtored to her former ſituation is either fantaſtical or unjuſt. If there be no value in the diſtinction of rank, what does ſhe ſuffer by being kept in the ſituation to which ſhe has deſcended? If there be value in that diſtinction, it ought to be ſteadily maintained. If indulgence be ſhown to ſuch conduct, and the offenders know that in a longer or ſhorter time they ſhall be received as well as if they had not contaminated their blood by a baſe alliance, the great check upon that inordinate caprice which generally occaſions low marriages will be removed, and the fair and comfortable order of improved life will be miſerably diſturbed."

Waller: "He doubtleſs praiſed many whom he would have been afraid to marry; and, perhaps, married one whom he would have been aſhamed to praiſe. Many qualities contribute to domeſtic happineſs, upon which poetry has no colours to beſtow; and many airs and ſallies may delight imagination, which he who flatters them never can approve."

"Suppoſing (ſaid he) a wife to be of a ſtudious or argumentative turn, it would be very troubleſome; for inſtance—if a woman ſhould continually dwell upon the ſubject of the Arian hereſy."

He expreſſed his opinion, that "a man has a very bad chance for happineſs in that ſtate unleſs he marries a woman of very ſtrong and fixed principles of religion."

He maintained, contrary to the common notion, that a woman would not be the worſe wife for being learned.

Talking of the heinouſneſs of the crime of adultery, by which the peace of families was deſtroyed, he ſaid, "Confuſion of progeny conſtitutes the eſſence of the crime; and therefore a woman who breaks her marriage vows is much more criminal than a man who does it. A man, to be ſure, is criminal in the ſight of GOD; but he does not do his wife a very material injury, if he does not inſult her; if, for inſtance, from mere

mere wantonneſs of appetite, he ſteals privately to her chambermaid. Sir, a wife ought not greatly to reſent this. I would not receive home a daughter who had run away from her huſband on that account. A wife ſhould ſtudy to reclaim her huſband by more attention to pleaſe him. Sir, a man will not, once in a hundred inſtances, leave his wife and go to a harlot, if his wife has not been negligent of pleaſing."

Here he diſcovered that acute diſcrimination, that ſolid judgment, and that knowledge of human nature, for which he was upon all occaſions remarkable. Taking care to keep in view the moral and religious duty, as underſtood in our nation, he ſhewed clearly, from reaſon and good ſenſe, the greater degree of culpability in the one ſex deviating from it than the other: and, at the ſame time, inculcated a very uſeful leſſon as to *the way to keep him.*

Being aſked if it was not hard that one deviation from chaſtity ſhould abſolutely ruin a young woman?—JOHNSON. "Why no, Sir; it is the great principle which ſhe is taught. When ſhe has given up that principle, ſhe has given up every notion of female honour and virtue, which are all included in chaſtity."

"I mentioned to him (ſays Mr. Boſwell) a diſpute between a friend of mine and his lady, con-

concerning conjugal infidelity, which my friend had maintained was by no means ſo bad in the huſband as in the wife. "Your friend was in the right, Sir, ſaid Johnſon. Between a man and his Maker it is a different queſtion; but between a man and his wife a huſband's infidelity is nothing. They are connected by children, by fortune, by ſerious conſiderations of community. Wife married women don't trouble themſelves about the infidelity of their huſbands."—BOSWELL. "To be ſure there is a great difference between the offence of infidelity in a man and that of his wife.—J. "The difference is boundleſs. The man impoſes no baſtards upon his wife."

"Here (Mr. B. obſerves) it may be queſtioned, whether Johnſon was entirely in the right. It will hardly be controverted, that the difference in the degree of criminality is very great on account of the conſequences; but ſtill it may be maintained, that, independent of moral obligation, infidelity is by no means a light offence in a huſband, becauſe it muſt hurt a delicate attachment, in which a mutual conſtancy is implied, with ſuch refined ſentiments as Maſſinger has exhibited in his play of "The Picture." Johnſon probably at another time would have admitted this opinion. And let it be kept in remembrance, that he was very careful not to

to give any encouragement to irregular conduct."

He praiſed the ladies of the preſent age, inſiſting that they were more faithful to their huſbands, and more virtuous in every reſpect, than in former times; becauſe their underſtandings were better cultivated. It was an undoubted proof of his good ſenſe and good diſpoſition, that he was never querulous, never prone to inveigh againſt the preſent times, as is ſo common when ſuperficial minds are on the fret.

He diſapproved of the Royal Marriage Bill; "Becauſe (ſaid he) I would not have the people think that the validity of marriage depends on the will of man, or that the right of a King depends on the will of man. I ſhould not have been againſt making the marriage of any of the royal family, without the approbation of the King and Parliament, highly criminal."

CHILDREN.

TALKING of the common remark, that affection deſcends, a gentleman ſaid, that "this was wiſely contrived for the preſervation of mankind, for which it was not ſo neceſſary that there

there ſhould be affection from children to parents, as from parents to children; nay there would be no harm in that view though children ſhould at a certain age eat their parents."—JOHNSON. "But, Sir, if this were known generally to be the caſe, parents would not have affection for children."—BOSWELL. "True, Sir; for it is in expectation of return that parents are ſo attentive to their children; and I know a very pretty inſtance of a little girl of whom her father was very fond, who once when he was in a melancholy fit, and had gone to bed, perſuaded him to riſe in good humour, by ſaying, "My dear papa, pleaſe to get up, and let me help you on with your clothes, that I may learn to do it when you are an old man."

"I know not (ſays Mr. B.) how ſo whimſical a thought came into my mind; but I aſked, "If, Sir, you were ſhut up in a caſtle, and a new-born child with you, what would you do?"—JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, I ſhould not much like my company."—*B.* "But would you take the trouble of rearing it?" He ſeemed, as may well be ſuppoſed, unwilling to purſue the ſubject; but upon my perſevering in my queſtion, replied, "Why yes, Sir, I would; but I muſt have all conveniencies. If I had no garden, I would make a ſhed on the roof, and take it there for freſh air. I ſhould feed it,

and

and waſh it much, and with warm water, to pleaſe it, not with cold water, to give it pain," — *B.* "But, Sir, does not heat relax?"—*J.* "Sir, you are not to imagine the water is to be very hot. I would not *coddle* the child. No, Sir, the hardy method of treating children does no good. I'll take you five children from London, who ſhall cuff five Highland children. Sir, a man bred in London will carry a burthen, or run, or wreſtle, as well as a man brought up in the hardieſt manner in the country." — *B.* "Good living, I ſuppoſe, makes the Londoners ſtrong.—*J.* "Why, Sir, I don't know that it does. Our chairmen from Ireland, who are as ſtrong men as any, have been brought up upon potatoes. Quantity makes up for quality."—*B.* "Would you teach this child that I have furniſhed you with any thing?"—*J.* "No, I would not be apt to teach it?"—*B.* "Would not you have a pleaſure in teaching it.—*J.* "No, Sir, I ſhould *not* have a pleaſure in teaching it."—*B.* "Have you not a pleaſure in teaching men! *There* I have you. You have the ſame pleaſure in teaching men that I ſhould have in teaching children."—*J.* "Why, ſomething about that."—*B.* "Do you think, Sir, that what is called natural affection is born with us? It ſeems to me to be the effect of habit, or of gratitude for kindneſs.

kindneſs. No child has it for a parent whom it has not ſeen."—*J.* "Why, Sir, I think there is an inſtinctive natural affection in parents toward their children."

EDUCATION.

In a converſation on the educating of children, Mr. Boſwell aſked Johnſon what he thought was beſt to teach them firſt.—"Sir (ſaid he), it is no matter what you teach them firſt, any more than what leg you ſhall put into your breeches firſt. Sir, you may ſtand diſputing which is beſt to put in firſt, but in the mean time your breech is bare. Sir, while you are conſidering which of two things you ſhould teach your child firſt, another boy has learnt them both."

Johnſon himſelf began to learn Latin with Mr. Hawkins, uſher, or under-maſter of Lichfield ſchool, "A man (ſaid he) very ſkilful in his little way." With him he continued two years, and then roſe to be under the care of Mr. Hunter, the head-maſter, who, according to his account, "was very ſevere, and wrong-headedly ſevere. He uſed (ſaid he) to beat us unmercifully; and he did not diſtinguiſh be-

tween

tween ignorance and negligence; for he would beat a boy equally for not knowing a thing, as for neglecting to know it. He would aſk a boy a queſtion; and if he did not anſwer it, he would beat him, without conſidering whether he had an opportunity of knowing how to anſwer it; for inſtance, he would call upon a boy and aſk him Latin for a candleſtick, which the boy could not expect to be aſked. Now, Sir, if a boy could anſwer every queſtion, there would be no need of a maſter to teach him."

Johnſon, however, was very ſenſible how much he owed to Mr. Hunter. Mr. Langton one day aſked him how he acquired ſo accurate a knowledge of Latin, in which he was thought not to be exceeded by any man of his time. He ſaid, "My maſter whipt me very well. Without that, Sir, I ſhould have done nothing." He alſo told Mr. Langton, that while Hunter was flogging his boys unmercifully, he uſed to ſay, "And this I do to ſave you from the gallows." Johnſon, upon all occaſions, expreſſed his approbation of enforcing inſtruction by means of the rod. "I would rather (ſaid he) have the rod the general terror of all, to make them learn, than tell a child, if you do thus, or thus, you will be more eſteemed than your brothers or ſiſters. The rod produces an effect which terminates in itſelf. A child is afraid of

being whipped, and gets his taſk, and there's an end on't; whereas, by exciting emulation and compariſons of ſuperiority, you lay the foundation of laſting miſchief; you make brothers and ſiſters hate each other."

"Johnſon's opinion of the moſt proper courſe to be purſued in the inſtruction of youth is aſcertained by the following paper in his own hand-writing, given to a relation, and now in the poſſeſſion of Mr. John Nichols:

"SCHEME FOR THE CLASSES OF A GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

"WHEN the introduction, or formation of nouns and verbs, is perfectly maſtered, let them learn

"Corderius, by Mr. Clarke, beginning at the ſame time to tranſlate out of the introduction, that by this means they may learn the ſyntax.—Then let them proceed to

"Eraſmus, with an Engliſh tranſlation, by the ſame author.

"Claſs II. Learns Eutropius and Cornelius Nepos, or Juſtin, with the tranſlation.

"N.B. The firſt claſs gets for their part every morning the rules which they have learned before, and in the afternoon learns the Latin rules of the nouns and verbs.

"They are examined in the rules which they have learned every Thurſday and Saturday.

"The

"The ſecond claſs does the ſame whilſt they are in Eutropius; afterwards their part is in the irregular nouns and verbs, and in the rules for making and ſcanning verſes. They are examined as the firſt.

"Claſs III. Ovid's Metamorphoſes in the morning, and Cæſar's Commentaries in the afternoon.

"Practiſe in the Latin rules till they are perfect in them; afterwards in Mr. Leeds's Greek Grammar. Examined as before.

"Afterwards they proceed to Virgil, beginning at the ſame time to write themes and verſes and to learn Greek; from thence paſſing on to Horace, &c. as ſhall ſeem moſt proper.

"I know not well what books to direct you to, becauſe you have not informed me what ſtudy you will apply yourſelf to. I believe it will be moſt for your advantage to apply yourſelf wholly to the languages, till you go to the Univerſity. The Greek authors I think it beſt for you to read are theſe:

"Cebes.	
"Ælian.	Attick.
"Lucian by Leeds.	Attick.
"Xenophon.	Attick.
"Homer.	Ionick.
"Theocritus.	Dorick.
"Euripides.	Attic and Dorick.

"Thus you will be tolerably ſkilled in all the dialects, beginning with the Attick, to which the reſt muſt be referred.

"In the ſtudy of Latin, it is proper not to read the latter authors, till you are well verſed in thoſe of the pureſt ages; as Terence, Tully, Cæſar, Salluſt, Nepos, Velleius Paterculus, Virgil, Horace, Phædrus.

"The greateſt and moſt neceſſary taſk ſtill remains, to attain a habit of expreſſion, without which knowledge is of little uſe. This is neceſſary in Latin, and more neceſſary in Engliſh; and can only be acquired by a daily imitation of the beſt and correcteſt authors.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"Dr. Johnſon and I (ſays Mr. B.) one day took a ſculler at the Temple-ſtairs, and ſet out for Greenwich. I aſked him if he really thought a knowledge of the Greek and Latin languages an eſſential requiſite to a good education.—JOHNSON. "Moſt certainly, Sir; for thoſe who know them have a very great advantage over thoſe who do not. Nay, Sir, it is wonderful what a difference learning makes upon people even in the common intercourſe of life, which does not appear to be much connected with it."—"And yet (ſaid Mr. B.) people go through the world very well, and carry on the buſineſs

buſineſs of life to good advantage, without learning.—*J.* "Why, Sir, that may be true in caſes where learning cannot poſſibly be of any uſe; for inſtance, this boy rows us as well without learning, as if he could ſing the ſong of Orpheus to the Argonauts, who were the firſt ſailors." He then called to the boy, "What would you give, my lad, to know about the Argonauts?"—"Sir (ſaid the boy), I would give what I have." Johnſon was much pleaſed with his anſwer, and we gave him a double fare. The Doctor then turning to Mr. B. ſaid, "Sir, a deſire of knowledge is the natural feeling of mankind; and every human being, whoſe mind is not debauched, will be willing to give all that he has to get knowledge."

To Mr. Langton when about to eſtabliſh a ſchool upon his eſtate, it had been ſuggeſted, that it might have a tendency to make the people leſs induſtrious. "No, Sir (ſaid Johnſon). While learning to read and write is a diſtinction, the few who have that diſtinction may be the leſs inclined to work; but when every body learns to read and write, it is no longer a diſtinction. A man who has a laced waiſtcoat is too fine a man to work; but if every body had laced waiſtcoats, we ſhould have people working in laced waiſtcoats. There are no people whatever more induſtrious, none who work more

than our manufacturers; yet they have all learnt to read and write. Sir, you muſt not neglect doing a thing immediately good, from fear of remote evil, from fear of its being abuſed. A man who has candles may ſit up too late, which he would not do if he had not candles; but nobody will deny that the art of making candles, by which light is continued to us beyond the time that the ſun gives us light, is a valuable art, and ought to be preſerved."—BOSWELL. "But, Sir, would it not be better to follow Nature, and go to bed and riſe juſt as Nature gives us light or withholds it?"—JOHNSON. "No, Sir; for then we ſhould have no kind of equality in the partition of our time between ſleeping and waking. It would be very different in different ſeaſons and in different places. In ſome of the northern parts of Scotland how little light is there in the depth of winter!

Of education at great ſchools, Johnſon diſplayed the advantages and diſadvantages in a luminous manner; but his arguments preponderated much in favour of the benefit which a boy of good parts might receive at one of them.

At another time he ſaid, "There is now leſs flogging in our great ſchools than formerly, but then leſs is learned there; ſo that what the boys get at one end they loſe at the other."—

Yet

Yet more, he obſerved, was learned in publick than in private ſchools, from emulation; "there is (ſaid he) the colliſion of mind with mind, or the radiation of many minds pointing to one centre. Though few boys make their own exerciſes, yet if a good exerciſe is given up, out of a great number of boys, it is made by ſomebody. I hate by-roads in education. Education is as well known, and has long been as well known, as ever it can be. Endeavouring to make children prematurely wiſe is uſeleſs labour. Suppoſe they have more knowledge at five or ſix years than other children, what uſe can be made of it? It will be loſt before it is wanted, and the waſte of ſo much time and labour of the teacher can never be repaid. Too much is expected from precocity, and too little performed. Miſs —— was an inſtance of early cultivation; but in what did it terminate? In marrying a little Preſbyterian parſon, who keeps an infant boarding-ſchool, ſo that all her employment now is,

'To ſuckle fools, and chronicle ſmall beer.'

She tells the children, 'this is a cat, and that is a dog with four legs and a tail;' ſee there! you are much better than a cat or a dog, for you can ſpeak. I am always for getting a boy forward in

his learning; for that is a ſure good. I would let him at firſt read *any* Engliſh book which happens to engage his attention; becauſe you have done a great deal when you have brought him to have entertainment from a book. He'll get better books afterwards."

Johnſon adviſed Mr. Boſwell not to *refine* in the education of his children. "Life (ſaid he) will not bear refinement; you muſt do as other people do. Above all, accuſtom your children conſtantly to tell the truth; if a thing happened at one window, and they, when relating it, ſay that it happened at another, do not let it paſs, but inſtantly check them; you do not know where deviation from truth will end."—Boswell. "It may come to the door: and when once an account is at all varied in one circumſtance, it may by degrees be varied ſo as to be totally different from what really happened." A Lady in the company, whoſe fancy was impatient of the rein, fidgeted at this, and ventured to ſay, "Nay, this is too much. If Mr. Johnſon ſhould forbid me to drink tea I would comply, as I ſhould feel the reſtraint only twice a day; but little variations in narrative muſt happen a thouſand times a day, if one is not perpetually watching."—Johnson. "Well, Madam, and you *ought* to be perpetually

tually watching. It is more from careleſſneſs about truth than from intentional lying, that there is ſo much falſehood in the world."

Talking of inſtruction, "People have now-a-days (ſaid he) got a ſtrange opinion that every thing ſhould be taught by lectures. Now I cannot ſee that lectures can do ſo much good as reading the books from which the lectures are taken. I know nothing that can be beſt taught by lectures, except where experiments are to be ſhewn. You may teach chemiſtry by lectures; you might teach making of ſhoes by lectures!"

He allowed very great influence to education. "I do not (he ſaid) deny but there is ſome original difference in minds; but it is nothing in compariſon of what is formed by education. We may inſtance the ſcience of *numbers*, which all minds are equally capable of attaining; yet we find a prodigious difference in the powers of different men, in that reſpect, after they are grown up, becauſe their minds have been more or leſs exerciſed in it; and I think the ſame cauſe will explain the difference of excellence in other things, gradations admitting always ſome difference in the firſt principles."

He often took occaſion to enlarge upon the wretchedneſs of a ſea life. "A ſhip (ſaid he)

is worſe than a gaol. There is in a gaol better air, better company, better conveniency of every kind; and a ſhip has the additional diſadvantage of being in danger. When men come to like a ſea life, they are not fit to live on land."—"Then (ſaid Mr. B.) it would be cruel in a father to breed his ſon to the ſea."—JOHNSON. "It would be cruel in a father who thinks as I do. Men go to ſea before they know the unhappineſs of that way of life; and when they have come to know it, they cannot eſcape from it, becauſe it is then too late to chooſe another profeſſion; as indeed is generally the caſe with men, when they have once engaged in any particular way of life."

In one of Mr. Dilly's literary parties, ſomebody was mentioned as having wiſhed that Milton's 'Tractate on Education' ſhould be printed along with his Poems in the edition of the Engliſh Poets then going on. Johnſon ſaid, "It would be breaking in upon the plan; but would be of no great conſequence. So far as it would be any thing it would be wrong. Education in England has been in danger of being hurt by two of its greateſt men, Milton and Locke. Milton's plan is impracticable, and I ſuppoſe has never been tried; Locke's, I fancy, has been tried often enough, but is very imperfect; it gives too much to one ſide,

and

and too little to the other: it gives too little to literature.

On another occaſion he ſaid, "Where there is no education, as in ſavage countries, men will have the upper hand of women. Bodily ſtrength, no doubt, contributes to this; but it would be ſo, excluſive of that; for it is mind that always governs. When it comes to dry underſtanding, man has the better."

Mr. Boſwell obſerved, that he was well aſſured, that the people of Otaheite who have the bread tree, the fruit of which ſerves them for bread, laughed heartily when they were informed of the tedious proceſs neceſſary with us to have bread;—plowing, ſowing, harrowing, reaping, threſhing, grinding, baking."—JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, all ignorant ſavages will laugh when they are told of the advantages of civilized life. Were you to tell men who live without houſes, how we pile brick upon brick, and rafter upon rafter, and that after a houſe is raiſed to a certain height, a man tumbles off a ſcaffold, and breaks his neck, he would laugh heartily at our folly in building; but it does not follow that men are better without houſes. No, Sir, (holding up a ſlice of a good loaf) this is better than the bread tree."

He repeated an argument, which is to be found in his "Rambler," againſt the notion that

that the brute creation is endowed with the faculty of reaſon: "birds build by inſtinct; they never improve; they build their firſt neſt as well as any one that they ever build." Goldſmith ſaid, "Yet we ſee if you take away a bird's neſt with the eggs in it, ſhe will make a ſlighter neſt, and lay again."—JOHNSON. "Sir, that is becauſe at firſt ſhe has full time and makes her neſt deliberately. In the caſe you mention ſhe is preſſed to lay, and muſt therefore make her neſt quickly, and conſequently it will be ſlight."—G. "The nidification of birds is what is leaſt known in natural hiſtory, though one of the moſt curious things in it."

The maſter of a public ſchool at Campbelltown, in Scotland, had been ſuſpended from his office, on a charge againſt him of having uſed immoderate and cruel correction. Mr. Boſwell was engaged to plead the cauſe of the maſter, and conſulted Dr. Johnſon on the ſubject, who made the following obſervations: "The charge is, that he has uſed immoderate and cruel correction. Correction, in itſelf, is not cruel; children, being not reaſonable, can be governed only by fear. To impreſs this fear, is therefore one of the firſt duties of thoſe who have the care of children. It is the duty of a parent, and has never been thought inconſiſtent with parental tenderneſs. It is the duty of a maſter,

a maſter, who is in the higheſt exaltation when he is *loco parentis*. Yet, as good things become evil by exceſs, correction, by being immoderate, may become cruel. But when is correction immoderate? When it is more frequent or more ſevere than is required *ad monendum et docendum*, for reformation and inſtruction. No ſeverity is cruel which obſtinacy makes neceſſary; for the greateſt cruelty would be to deſiſt, and leave the ſcholar too careleſs for inſtruction, and too much hardened for reproof. Locke, in his treatiſe of Education, mentions a mother with applauſe, who whipped an infant eight times before ſhe had ſubdued it; for had ſhe ſtopped at the ſeventh act of correction, her daughter, ſays he, would have been ruined. The degrees of obſtinacy in young minds are very different; as different muſt be the degrees of perſevering ſeverity. A ſtubborn ſcholar muſt be corrected till he is ſubdued. The diſcipline of a ſchool is military. There muſt either be unbounded licence or abſolute authority. The maſter who puniſhes, not only conſults the future happineſs of him who is the immediate ſubject of correction, but he propagates obedience through the whole ſchool, and eſtabliſhes regularity by exemplary juſtice. The victorious obſtinacy of a ſingle boy would make his future endeavours of reformation or inſtruction

inſtruction totally ineffectual: obſtinacy therefore muſt never be victorious. Yet it is well known, that there ſometimes occurs a ſullen and hardy reſolution, that laughs at all common puniſhment, and bids defiance to all common degrees of pain. Correction muſt be proportioned to occaſions. The flexible will be reformed by gentle diſcipline, and the refractory muſt be ſubdued by harſher methods. The degrees of ſcholaſtick, as of military puniſhment, no ſtated rules can aſcertain. It muſt be enforced till it overpowers temptation; till ſtubbornneſs becomes flexible, and perverſeneſs regular. Cuſtom and reaſon have, indeed, ſet ſome bounds to ſcholaſtick penalties: The ſchoolmaſter inflicts no capital puniſhments, nor enforces his edicts by either death or mutilation. The civil law has wiſely determined, that a maſter who ſtrikes at a ſcholar's eye ſhall be conſidered as criminal. But puniſhments, however ſevere, that produce no laſting evil, may be juſt and reaſonable, becauſe they may be neceſſary. Such have been the puniſhments uſed by the ſchoolmaſter accuſed. No ſcholar has gone from him either blind or lame, or with any of his limbs or powers injured or impaired. They were irregular, and he puniſhed them; they were obſtinate, and he enforced his puniſhment. But, how-

ever provoked, he never exceeded the limits of moderation, for he inflicted nothing beyond preſent pain; and how much of that was required, no man is ſo little able to determine as thoſe who have determined againſt him—the parents of the offenders. It has been ſaid, that he uſed unprecedented and improper inſtruments of correction. Of this accuſation the meaning is not very eaſy to be found. No inſtrument of correction is more proper than another, but as it is better adapted to produce preſent pain without laſting miſchief. Whatever were his inſtruments, no laſting miſchief has enſued; and therefore, however unuſual, in hands ſo cautious they were proper. It has been objected, that he admits the charge of cruelty, by producing no evidence to confute it. Let it be conſidered, that his ſcholars are either diſperſed at large in the world, or continue to inhabit the place in which they were bred. Thoſe who are diſperſed cannot be found; thoſe who remain are the ſons of his perſecutors, and are not likely to ſupport a man to whom their fathers are enemies. If it be ſuppoſed that the enmity of their fathers proves the juſtice of the charge, it muſt be conſidered how often experience ſhows us, that men who are angry on one ground will accuſe on another; with how little kindneſs, in a town of low

He one day obſerved, "All knowledge is of itſelf of ſome value. There is nothing ſo minute or inconſiderable, that I would not rather know it than not. In the ſame manner, all power, of whatever ſort, is of itſelf deſirable. A man would not ſubmit to hem a ruffle of his wife, or his wife's maid; but if a mere wiſh could obtain it, he would rather wiſh to be able to hem a ruffle."

To Mr. Boſwell (while ſtudying at Utrecht) he gave the following advice:

"You will, perhaps, wiſh to aſk what ſtudy I would recommend. I ſhall not ſpeak of theology, becauſe it ought not to be conſidered as a queſtion whether you ſhall endeavour to know the will of GOD. I ſhall, therefore, conſider only ſuch ſtudies as we are at liberty to purſue or to neglect; and of theſe I know not how you will make a better choice, than by ſtudying the civil law, as your father adviſes, and the ancient languages, as you had determined for yourſelf; at leaſt reſolve, while you remain in any ſettled reſidence, to ſpend a certain number of hours every day amongſt your books. The diſſipation of thought of which you complain, is nothing more than the vacillation of a mind ſuſpended between different motives, and changing its direction as any motive gains or loſes ſtrength. If you can

but

but kindle in your mind any ſtrong deſire, if you can but keep predominant any wiſh for ſome particular excellence or attainment, the guſts of imagination will break away without any effect upon your conduct, and commonly without any traces left upon the memory.

" There lurks, perhaps, in every human heart a deſire of diſtinction, which inclines every man firſt to hope, and then to believe, that Nature has given him ſomething peculiar to himſelf. This vanity makes one mind nurſe averſions, and another actuate deſires, till they riſe by art much above their original ſtate of power; and as affectation, in time, improves to habit, they at laſt tyranniſe over him who at firſt encouraged them only for ſhow. Every deſire is a viper in the boſom, who, while he was chill, was harmleſs; but when warmth gave him ſtrength, exerted it in poiſon. You know a gentleman, who, when firſt he ſet his foot in the gay world, as he prepared himſelf to whirl in the vortex of pleaſure, imagined a total indifference and univerſal negligence to be the moſt agreeable concomitants of youth, and the ſtrongeſt indication of an airy temper and a quick apprehenſion. Vacant to every object, and ſenſible of every impulſe, he thought that all appearance of diligence would deduct ſomething from the reputation of genius; and

hoped that he ſhould appear to attain, amidſt all the eaſe of careleſſneſs, and all the tumult of diverſion, that knowledge and thoſe accompliſhments which mortals of the common fabrick obtain only by mute abſtraction and ſolitary drudgery. He tried this ſcheme of life awhile, was made weary of it by his ſenſe and his virtue; he then wiſhed to return to his ſtudies; and finding long habits of idleneſs and pleaſure harder to be cured than he expected, ſtill willing to retain his claim to ſome extraordinary prerogatives, reſolved the common conſequences of irregularity into an unalterable decree of deſtiny, and concluded that Nature had originally formed him incapable of rational employment.

"Let all ſuch fancies, illuſive and deſtructive, be baniſhed henceforward from your thoughts for ever. Reſolve, and keep your reſolution; chooſe, and purſue your choice. If you ſpend this day in ſtudy, you will find yourſelf ſtill more able to ſtudy to-morrow; not that you are to expect that you ſhall at once obtain a complete victory. Depravity is not very eaſily overcome. Reſolution will ſometimes relax, and diligence will ſometimes be interrupted; but let no accidental ſurpriſe or deviation, whether ſhort or long, diſpoſe you to deſpondency. Conſider theſe failings as incident to all

all mankind. Begin again where you left off, and endeavour to avoid the ſeducements that prevailed over you before."

CONDUCT.

"I BELIEVE (ſaid Johnſon) it is beſt to throw life into a method, that every hour may bring its employment, and every employment have its hour. Xenophon obſerves, in his 'Treatiſe of Œconomy,' that if every thing be kept in a certain place, when any thing is worn out or conſumed, the vacuity which it leaves will ſhew what is wanting; ſo if every part of time has its duty, the hour will call into remembrance its proper engagement."

He obſerved, that "it was a moſt mortifying reflection for any man to conſider *what he had done*, compared with what *he might have done*."

He would allow no ſettled indulgence o idleneſs upon principle, and always repelled every attempt to urge excuſes for it. A friend one day ſuggeſted, that it was not wholeſome to ſtudy ſoon after dinner. "Ah, Sir, (ſaid Johnſon) don't give way to ſuch a fancy. At one time of my life I had taken it into my head

that it was not wholeſome to ſtudy between breakfaſt and dinner."

Mr. Boſwell one day told him, that he had been to ſee a man ride upon three horſes. "Such a man, Sir, (ſaid he) ſhould be encouraged; for his performances ſhew the extent of the human powers in one inſtance, and thus tend to raiſe our opinion of the faculties of man. He ſhews what may be attained by perſevering application; ſo that every man may hope, that by giving as much application, although perhaps he may never ride three horſes at a time, or dance upon a wire, yet he may be equally expert in whatever profeſſion he has choſen to purſue."

At one time he ſaid, "The more a man extends and varies his acquaintance the better." This, however, was meant with a juſt reſtriction; for on another occaſion he obſerved, "A man may be ſo much of every thing, that he is nothing of any thing."

At a late period of his life he ſaid to Sir Joſhua Reynolds, "If a man does not make new acquaintance as he advances through life, he will ſoon find himſelf left alone. A man, Sir, ſhould keep his friendſhip in *conſtant repair*."

During a viſit at Oxford, the following converſation paſſed between the Doctor and Mr. Boſwell

Boſwell on the ſubject of Mr. B.'s trying his fortune at the Engliſh bar. Being aſked whether a very extenſive acquaintance in London, which was very valuable, and of great advantage to a man at large, might not be prejudicial to a lawyer, by preventing him from giving ſufficient attention to his buſineſs, Johnſon ſaid, "Sir, you will attend to buſineſs as buſineſs lays hold of you. When not actually employed, you may ſee your friends as much as you do now. You may dine at a club every day, and ſup with one of the members every night; and you may be as much at public places as one who has ſeen them all would wiſh to be. But you muſt take care to attend conſtantly in Weſtminſter Hall; both to mind your buſineſs, as it is almoſt all learnt there (for nobody reads now); and to ſhew that you want to have buſineſs. And you muſt not be too often ſeen at public places, that competitors may not have it to ſay, 'He is always at the Playhouſe or at Ranelagh, and never to be found at his chambers.' And, Sir, there muſt be a kind of ſolemnity in the manner of a profeſſional man."

Concerning a private tranſaction, on which his opinion was aſked, he made the following reflections, which are applicable on other occaſions: "Nothing deſerves more compaſſion than wrong conduct with good meaning; than

loſs or obloquy ſuffered by one who, as he is conſcious only of good intentions, wonders why he loſes that kindneſs which he wiſhes to preſerve; and not knowing his own fault, if, as may ſometimes happen, nobody will tell him, goes on to offend by his endeavours to pleaſe."

At another time he ſaid, "Never impoſe taſks upon mortals. To require two things is the way to have them both undone. In the correſpondence of your friends do not fancy that an intermiſſion of writing is a decay of kindneſs. No man is always in a diſpoſition to write; nor has any man at all times ſomething to ſay."

Being aſkéd whether a man's being forward to make himſelf known to eminent people, and ſeeing as much of life, and getting as much information as he could in every way, was not leſſening himſelf by his forwardneſs, he ſaid, "No, Sir; a man always makes himſelf greater as he increaſes his knowledge."

Talking of a court-martial that was ſitting upon a very momentous public occaſion, he expreſſed much doubt of an enlightened deciſion; and ſaid, "That perhaps there was not a member of it who, in the whole courſe of his life, had ever ſpent an hour by himſelf in balancing probabilities."

He obſerved, that "A principal ſource of erroneous judgment was viewing things partially, and only on *one ſide*: as for inſtance, *fortune-*

fortune-hunters, when they contemplated the fortunes *ſingly* and *ſeparately* it was a dazzling and tempting object; but when they came to poſſeſs the wives and their fortunes *together*, they began to ſuſpect that they had not made quite ſo good a bargain."

He one day maintained, that a father had no right to control the inclinations of his daughters in marriage.

Talking of divorces, Mr. Boſwell aſked if Othello's doctrine was not plauſible?

> "He that is robb'd, not wanting what is ſtolen,
> Let him not know it, and he's not robb'd at all."

Dr. Johnſon and Mrs. Thrale joined againſt this.—JOHNSON. "Aſk any man if he'd wiſh not to know of ſuch an injury."—BOSWELL. "Would you tell your friend to make him unhappy?"—"*J.* "Perhaps, Sir, I ſhould not; but that would be from prudence on my own account. A man would tell his father."—*B.* "Yes, becauſe he would not have ſpurious children to get any ſhare of the family inheritance."—Mrs. THRALE. "Or he would tell his brother."—*B.* "Certainly his *elder* brother."—*J.* You would tell your friend of a woman's infamy to prevent his marrying a proſtitute: there is the ſame reaſon to tell him of his wife's infidelity, when he is married, to prevent the conſequences of

impoſition. It is a breach of confidence not to tell a friend."

Talking of a point of delicate ſcrupuloſity of moral conduct, he ſaid to Mr. Langton, "Men of harder minds than ours will do many things from which you and I would ſhrink; yet, Sir, they will perhaps do more good in life than we. But let us try to help one another. If there be a wrong twiſt it may be ſet right. It is not probable that two people can be wrong the ſame way."

He thus characteriſed the Duke of Devonſhire, grandfather of the preſent repreſentative of that very reſpectable family: "He was not a man of ſuperior abilities, but he was a man ſtrictly faithful to his word. If, for inſtance, he had promiſed you an acorn, and none had grown that year in his woods, he would not have contented himſelf with that excuſe; he would have ſent to Denmark for it. So unconditional was he in keeping his word; ſo high as to the point of honour."—"This (ſays Mr. Boſwell) was a liberal teſtimony from the Tory Johnſon to the virtue of a great Whig nobleman."

The conflict of oppoſite principles he deſcribed as "The contention between pleaſure and virtue, a ſtruggle which will always be continued while the preſent ſyſtem of nature

ſhall

ſhall ſubſiſt: nor can hiſtory or poetry exhibit more than pleaſure triumphing over virtue, and virtue ſubjugating pleaſure."

Speaking of a certain prelate who exerted himſelf very laudably in building churches and parſonage-houſes, he ſaid, "I do not, however, find that he is eſteemed a man of much profeſſional learning, or a liberal patron of it; yet it is well where a man poſſeſſes any ſtrong poſitive excellence. Few have all kinds of merit belonging to their character. We muſt not examine matters too deeply.—No, Sir, a *fallible being will fail ſomewhere.*"

"Colley Cibber (he ſaid) was by no means a blockhead; but by arrogating to himſelf too much, he was in danger of loſing that degree of eſtimation to which he was entitled."

In a party at Mr. Thrale's, a gentleman attacked Garrick for being vain:—*J.* "No wonder, Sir, that he is vain; a man who is perpetually flattered in every mode that can be conceived. So many bellows have blown the fire, that one wonders he is not by this time become a cinder."—*B.* "And ſuch bellows too. Lord Mansfield with his cheeks like to burſt: Lord Chatham like an Æolus. I have read ſuch notes from them to him as were enough to turn his head."—*J.* "True. When he whom every body elſe flatters flatters me,

me, I then am truly happy."—Mrs. THRALE. "The ſentiment is in Congreve, I think."—*J.* "Yes, Madam, in 'The Way of the World:'

"If there's delight in love, 'tis when I ſee
That heart which others bleed for, bleed for me."

To a lady who endeavoured to vindicate herſelf from blame for neglecting ſocial attention to worthy neighbours, by ſaying, "I would go to them if it would do them any good;" he ſaid, "What good, Madam, do you expect to have in your power to do them? It is ſhewing them reſpect, and that is doing them good."

Dr. Taylor once commended a phyſician who was known to him and Dr. Johnſon, and ſaid, "I fight many battles for him, as many people in the country diſlike him."—*J.* "But you ſhould conſider, Sir, that by every one of your victories he is a loſer; for every man of whom you get the better will be very angry and reſolve not to employ him; whereas, if people get the better of you in argument about him, they'll think, 'We'll ſend for Dr. ****** nevertheleſs.' This was an obſervation deep and ſure in human nature.

On a certain occaſion Johnſon made a remark, "That the law againſt uſury is for the protection of creditors as well as of debtors; for

of

if there were no ſuch check, people would be apt, from the temptation of great intereſt, to lend to deſperate perſons, by whom they would loſe their money. Accordingly there are inſtances of ladies being ruined, by having injudiciouſly ſunk their fortunes for high annuities, which, after a few years, ceaſed to be paid, in conſequence of the ruined circumſtances of the borrower."

To Mr. B. (who had thoughts of binding himſelf to ſome practice by the obligation of a voluntary vow) he ſaid, "Do not accuſtom yourſelf to enchain your volatility by vows; they will ſometime leave a thorn in your mind which you will, perhaps, never be able to extract or eject. Take this warning, it is of great importance."

"The applauſe of a ſingle human being is of great conſequence."—"This (ſays Mr. B.) he obſerved to me with great earneſtneſs of manner, very near the time of his deceaſe, on occaſion of having deſired me to read a letter addreſſed to him from ſome perſon in the North of England; which, when I had done, and he aſked me what the contents were; as I thought being particular upon it might fatigue him, it being of great length, I only told him in general that it was highly to his praiſe; and then he expreſſed himſelf as above."

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He ſaid of one of his friends—"He is ruining himſelf without pleaſure. A man who loſes at play, or who runs out his fortune at court, makes his eſtate leſs, in hopes of making it bigger: but it is a ſad thing to paſs through the quagmire of parſimony to the gulph of ruin. To paſs over the flowery path of extravagance is very well."

Upon the queſtion, whether a man who had been guilty of vicious actions would do well to force himſelf into ſolitude and ſadneſs, Johnſon ſaid, "No, Sir, unleſs it prevent him from being vicious again. With ſome people, gloomy penitence is only madneſs turned upſide down. A man may be gloomy, till, in order to be relieved from gloom, he has recourſe again to criminal indulgences."

Mr. Boſwell once confeſſed an exceſs of which he had very ſeldom been guilty, namely, that he had ſpent a whole night in playing at cards, and that he could not look back on it with ſatisfaction. Inſtead of a harſh animadverſion, Johnſon mildly ſaid, "Alas, Sir! on how few things can we look back with ſatisfaction!"—*B.* "By aſſociating with you, Sir, I am always getting an acceſſion of wiſdom. But perhaps a man, after knowing his own character — the limited ſtrength of his own mind, ſhould not be deſirous of having too

too much wiſdom, conſidering, *quid valeant humeri*, how little he can carry."—*J.* "Sir, be as wiſe as you can; let a man be *aliis lætus, ſapiens ſibi:*

'Though pleas'd to ſee the dolphins play,
I mind my compaſs and my way.'

You may be wiſe in your ſtudy in the morning, and gay in company at a tavern in the evening. Every man is to take care of his own wiſdom and his own virtue, without minding too much what others think."

Talking of the great conſequence which a man acquired by being employed in his profeſſion, "I ſuggeſted (ſays Mr. B.) a doubt of the juſtice of the general opinion, that it is improper in a lawyer to ſolicit employment; for why, I urged, ſhould it not be equally allowable to ſolicit that as the means of conſequence as it is to ſolicit votes to be elected a member of parliament? Mr. Strahan had told me, that a countryman of his and mine, who had riſen to eminence in the law, had, when firſt making his way, ſolicited him to get him employed in city cauſes."—*J.* "Sir, it is wrong to ſtir up law-ſuits; but when once it is certain that a law-ſuit is to go on, there is nothing wrong in a lawyer's endeavouring that he ſhall have the benefit rather than another."—*B.* "You would not ſolicit employment, Sir,

if

if you were a lawyer."—*J.* "No, Sir; but not becauſe I ſhould think it wrong, but becauſe I ſhould diſdain it." This was a good diſtinction, which will be felt by men of juſt pride.—He proceeded: "However, I would not have a lawyer to be wanting to himſelf in uſing fair means. I would have him to inject a little hint now and then, to prevent his being overlooked."

Againſt melancholy he recommended conſtant occupation of mind, a great deal of exerciſe, moderation in eating and drinking, and eſpecially to ſhun drinking at night. He ſaid, melancholy people were apt to fly to intemperance for relief, but that it ſunk them much deeper in miſery. He obſerved, that labouring men who work hard, and live ſparingly, are ſeldom or never troubled with low ſpirits.

On Mr. Boſwell's ſucceeding to his paternal inheritance, it was not to be ſuppoſed that the great moraliſt would omit the opportunity of adviſing his friend. Accordingly, we find him thus addreſſing Mr. B.: "You have now a new ſtation, and have therefore new cares and new employments. Life, as Cowley ſeems to ſay, ought to reſemble a well-ordered poem; of which one rule generally received is, that the exordium ſhould be ſimple, and ſhould promiſe little. Begin your new courſe of life with

with the leaſt ſhow and the leaſt expence poſſible; you may at your pleaſure increaſe both, but you cannot eaſily diminiſh them. Do not think your eſtate your own while any man can call upon you for money which you cannot pay; therefore, begin with timorous parſimony. Let it be your firſt care not to be in any man's debt.

"When the thoughts are extended to a future ſtate, the preſent life ſeems hardly worthy of all thoſe principles of conduct and maxims of prudence which one generation of men has tranſmitted to another; but upon a cloſer view, when it is perceived how much evil is produced, and how much good is impeded by embarraſſment and diſtreſs, and how little room the expedients of poverty leave for the exerciſe of virtue, it grows manifeſt that the boundleſs importance of the next life enforces ſome attention to the intereſts of this.

"Be kind to old ſervants, and ſecure the kindneſs of the agents and factors: do not diſguſt them by aſperity, or unwelcome gaiety, or apparent ſuſpicion. From them you muſt learn the real ſtate of your affairs, the characters of your tenants, and the value of your lands.

"You have now a new character and new duties; think on them, and practiſe them.

"Make

"Make an impartial eſtimate of your revenue; and whatever it is, live upon leſs. Reſolve never to be poor. Frugality is not only the baſis of quiet, but of beneficence. No man can help others that wants help himſelf; we muſt have enough before we have to ſpare.

"Poverty is a great enemy to human happineſs; it certainly deſtroys liberty, and it makes ſome virtues impracticable, and others extremely difficult."

Upon its being mentioned, that an opulent and very indolent Scotch nobleman, who totally reſigned the management of his affairs to a man of knowledge and abilities, had claimed ſome merit by ſaying, "The next beſt thing to managing a man's own affairs well, is being ſenſible of incapacity, and not attempting it, but having full confidence in one who can do it," Johnſon ſaid, "Nay, Sir, this is paltry. There is a middle courſe. Let a man give application; and depend upon it he will ſoon get above a deſpicable ſtate of helpleſsneſs, and attain the power of acting for himſelf."

MANNERS.

MANNERS.

JOHNSON had an utter abhorrence of affectation. Talking of old Mr. Langton, he ſaid, "Sir, you will ſeldom ſee ſuch a gentleman; ſuch are his ſtores of literature; ſuch his knowledge in divinity; and ſuch his exemplary life: and, Sir (added he), he has no grimace, no geſticulation, no burſts of admiration on trivial occaſions; he never embraces you with an overacted cordiality."

Being in company with a gentleman who affected to maintain Dr. Berkeley's ſtrange poſition, "That nothing exiſts but as perceived by ſome mind;" when the gentleman was going away, Johnſon ſaid to him, "Pray, Sir, don't leave us; for we may, perhaps, forget to think of you, and then you will ceaſe to exiſt."

An impudent fellow from Scotland was deſcribed to him, as affecting to be a ſavage, and railing at all eſtabliſhed ſyſtems:—Johnſon obſerved, "There is nothing ſurprizing in this. He wants to make himſelf conſpicuous. He would tumble in a hogſtye, as long as you looked at him and called to him to come out.

But let him alone, never mind him, and he'll ſoon give it over."

It was added, that the ſame perſon maintained that there was no diſtinction between virtue and vice.—J. "Why, Sir, if the fellow does not think as he ſpeaks he is lying; and I ſee not what honour he can propoſe to himſelf from having the character of a liar. But if he does really think that there is no diſtinction between virtue and vice, why, Sir, when he leaves our houſes, let us count our ſpoons. There is (ſaid he) in human nature a general inclination to make people ſtare; and every wiſe man has himſelf to cure of it, and does cure himſelf. If you wiſh to make people ſtare by doing better than others, why, make them ſtare till they ſtare their eyes out. But conſider how eaſy it is to make people ſtare by being abſurd. I may do it by going into a drawing-room without my ſhoes. You remember the gentleman in the Spectator, who had a commiſſion of lunacy taken againſt him for his extreme ſingularity, ſuch as never wearing a wig, but a night-cap. Now, Sir, abſtractedly the night-cap was beſt; but, relatively, the advantage was overbalanced by his making the boys run after him."

Talking of our feeling for the diſtreſſes of others, Johnſon ſaid, "Why, Sir, there is much

much noiſe made about it, but it is greatly exaggerated. No, Sir, we have a certain degree of feeling to prompt us to do good; more than that Providence does not intend. It would be miſery to no purpoſe."—*B.* "But ſuppoſe now, Sir, that one of your intimate friends were apprehended for an offence for which he might be hanged."—*J.* "I ſhould do what I could to bail him, and give him any other aſſiſtance; but if he were once fairly hanged, I ſhould not ſuffer."—*B.* "Would you eat your dinner that day, Sir?"—*J.* "Yes, Sir; and eat it as if he were eating it with me. Why, there's Baretti, who is to be tried for his life to-morrow, friends have riſen up for him on every ſide; yet if he ſhould be hanged, none of them will eat a ſlice of plumb-pudding the leſs. Sir, that ſympathetic feeling goes a very little way in depreſſing the mind."

"I told him (ſays Mr. B.) that I had dined lately at Foote's, who ſhewed me a letter to him from Tom Davies, telling him that he had not been able to ſleep from the concern which he felt on account of "*this ſad affair of Baretti*," begging of him to try if he could ſuggeſt any thing that might be of ſervice; and, at the ſame time, recommending to him an induſtrious young man who kept a pickle-ſhop.—*J.* "Aye, Sir, here you have a ſpecimen of human ſympathy;

pathy; a friend hanged, and a cucumber pickled. We know not whether Baretti or the pickle-man has kept Davies from ſleep; nor does he know himſelf. And as to his not ſleeping, Sir, Tom Davies is a very great man; Tom has been upon the ſtage, and knows how to do thoſe things: I have not been upon the ſtage, and cannot do thoſe things."—*B.* "I have often blamed myſelf, Sir, for not feeling for others as ſenſibly as many ſay they do."—*J.* "Sir, don't be duped by them any more. You will find theſe very feeling people are not very ready to do you good. They *pay* you by *feeling*."

Of the late Mr. Fitzherbert, of Derbyſhire, he ſaid, "There was no ſparkle, no brilliancy in Fitzherbert; but I never knew a man who was ſo generally acceptable. He made every body quite eaſy; overpowered nobody by the ſuperiority of his talents; made no man think worſe of himſelf by being his rival; ſeemed always to liſten; did not oblige you to hear much from him; and did not oppoſe what you ſaid. Every body liked him; but he had no friend, as I underſtand the word, nobody with whom he exchanged intimate thoughts. People were willing to think well of every thing about him. A gentleman was making an affected rant, as many people do, of great

feelings

feelings about 'his dear ſon,' who was at ſchool near London; how anxious he was leſt he might be ill, and what he would give to ſee him.—'Can't you (ſaid Fitzherbert) take a poſt-chaiſe, and go to him?' This, to be ſure, *finiſhed* the affected man, but there was not much in it *. However, this was circulated as wit for a whole winter, and I believe part of a ſummer too; a proof that he was no very witty man. He was an inſtance of the truth of the obſervation, that a man will pleaſe more upon the whole by negative qualities than by poſitive; by never offending, than by giving a great deal of delight. In the firſt place, men hate more ſteadily than they love; and if I have ſaid ſomething to hurt a man once, I ſhall not get the better of this by ſaying many things to pleaſe him."

On another occaſion Johnſon remarked, "That pity is not natural to man. Children are always cruel. Savages are always cruel.

* The affected gentleman is underſtood to have been the late John Gilbert Cooper, Eſq. author of a Life of Socrates, and of ſome poems in Dodſley's collection. Mr. Fitzherbert found him one morning, apparently, in ſuch violent agitation, on account of the indiſpoſition of his ſon, as to ſeem beyond the power of comfort. At length, however, he exclaimed, "I'll write an elegy." Mr. Fitzherbert, being ſatisfied by this of the ſincerity of his emotions, ſlyly ſaid, "Had not you better take a poſt-chaiſe, and go and ſee him." It was the ſhrewdneſs of the inſinuation which made the ſtory he circulated.

Pity is acquired and improved by the cultivation of reaſon. We may have uneaſy ſenſations from ſeeing a creature in diſtreſs, without pity; for we have not pity unleſs we wiſh to relieve them. When I am on my way to dine with a friend, and finding it late have bid the coachman make haſte, if I happen to attend when he whips his horſes, I may feel unpleaſantly that the animals are put to pain, but I do not wiſh him to deſiſt. No, Sir, I wiſh him to drive on."

On a very wet day, Mr. Boſwell complained of the diſagreeable effects of ſuch weather; but Johnſon ſaid, "Sir, this is all imagination, which phyſicians encourage; for man lives in air, as a fiſh lives in water; ſo that if the atmoſphere preſs heavy from above, there is an equal reſiſtance from below. To be ſure, bad weather is hard upon people who are obliged to be abroad; and men cannot labour ſo well in the open air in bad weather as in good: but, Sir, a ſmith or a taylor, whoſe work is within doors, will ſurely do as much in rainy weather as in fair. Some very delicate frames, indeed, may be affected by wet weather, but not common conſtitutions."

One evening, when Johnſon was ſomewhat fretful from illneſs, a gentleman aſked him, whether he had been abroad that day.—"Don't talk

talk ſo childiſhly (ſaid he), you may as well aſk if I hanged myſelf to-day." Mr. B. mentioned politicks.—*J.* "Sir, I 'd as ſoon have a man to break my bones as talk to me of public affairs, internal or external. I have lived to ſee things all as bad as they can be." He ſome time after obſerved, "That diſeaſe produces much ſelfiſhneſs. A man in pain is looking after eaſe; and lets moſt other things go as chance ſhall diſpoſe of them."

To Mr. Boſwell he once ſaid, "You are always complaining of melancholy, and I conclude, from thoſe complaints, that you are fond of it. No man talks of that which he is deſirous to conceal, and every man deſires to conceal that of which he is aſhamed. Do not pretend to deny it—*manifeſtum habemus furem*; make it an invariable and obligatory law to yourſelf never to mention your own mental diſeaſes; if you are never to ſpeak of them you will think on them but little; and if you think little of them they will moleſt you rarely. When you talk of them, it is plain that you want either praiſe or pity; for praiſe there is no room, and pity will do you no good; therefore, from this hour ſpeak no more, think no more about them."

"I one day aſked him (ſays his Biographer) if he was not diſſatisfied with having ſo ſmall

a ſhare of wealth, and none of thoſe diſtinctions in the State which are the objects of ambition. He had only a penſion of three hundred a year. Why was he not in ſuch circumſtances as to keep his coach? Why had he not ſome conſiderable office?"—*J.* "Sir, I have never complained of the world; nor do I think that I have reaſon to complain. It is rather to be wondered at that I have ſo much. My penſion is more out of the uſual courſe of things than any inſtance that I have known. Here, Sir, was a man avowedly no friend to government at the time, who got a penſion without aſking for it. I never courted the great; they ſent for me; but I think they now give me up. They are ſatisfied; they have ſeen enough of me." Upon my obſerving, that I could not believe this, for they muſt certainly be highly pleaſed by his converſation; conſcious of his own ſuperiority, he anſwered, "No, Sir; great lords and great ladies don't love to have their mouths ſtopped." This was very expreſſive of the effect which the force of his underſtanding and brilliancy of his fancy could not but produce; and, to be ſure, they muſt have found themſelves ſtrangely diminiſhed in his company. When I warmly declared how happy I was at all times to hear him—"Yes, Sir (ſaid

(ſaid he); but if you were lord chancellor it would not be ſo; you would then conſider your own dignity."

He found great fault with a certain gentleman for keeping a bad table. "Sir, (ſaid he) when a man is invited to dinner, he is diſappointed if he does not get ſomething good. I adviſed Mrs. Thrale, who has no card parties at her houſe, to give ſweetmeats, and ſuch good things, in an evening as are not commonly given, and ſhe would find company enough come to her; for every body loves to have things which pleaſe the palate put in their way, without trouble or preparation." Such was his attention to the *minutiæ* of life and manners.

To the queſtion, whether when a man knows that ſome of his intimate friends are invited to the houſe of another friend, with whom they are all equally intimate, he may join them without an invitation, Johnſon anſwered, "No, Sir; he is not to go when he is not invited. They may be invited on purpoſe to abuſe him" (ſmiling).

One of a company not being come at the appointed hour, Mr. Boſwell propoſed, as uſual upon ſuch occaſions, to order dinner to be ſerved; adding, "Ought ſix people to be kept waiting for one?"—"Why yes (anſwered Johnſon, with a delicate humanity) if the one will

will ſuffer more by your ſitting down, than the fix will do by waiting."

Talking of the mode adopted by ſome to riſe in the world by courting great men, and being aſked whether he had ever ſubmitted to it, he ſaid, " Why, Sir, I never was near enough to great men to court them. You may be prudently attached to great men, and yet independent ; you are not to do what you think wrong, and you are to calculate, and not to pay too dear for what you get. You muſt not give a ſhilling's worth of court for ſix pence worth of good ; but if you can get a ſhilling's worth of good for ſix pence worth of court, you are a fool if you do not pay court."

Being aſked how far he thought wealth ſhould be employed in hoſpitality, he anſwered, " You are to conſider, that ancient hoſpitality, of which we hear ſo much, was in an uncommercial country, when men being idle were glad to be entertained at rich men's tables ; but in a commercial country, in a buſy country, time becomes precious, and therefore hoſpitality is not ſo much valued. No doubt there is ſtill room for a certain degree of it ; and a man has a ſatisfaction in ſeeing his friends eating and drinking around him : but promiſcuous hoſpitality is not the way to gain real influence. You muſt help ſome people at table

ble before others; you muſt aſk ſome people how they like their wine oftener than others. You therefore offend more people than you pleaſe. You are like the French ſtateſman who ſaid when he granted a favour, '*J'ai fait dix mécontents et un ingrat.*' Beſides, Sir, being entertained ever ſo well at a man's table, impreſſes no laſting regard or eſteem. No, Sir, the way to make ſure of power and influence is, by lending money confidentially to your neighbours at a ſmall intereſt, or perhaps at no intereſt at all, and having their bonds in your poſſeſſion."—BOSWELL. "May not a man, Sir, employ his riches to advantage in educating young men of merit?"—JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, if they fall in your way; but if it be underſtood that you patronize young men of merit, you will be haraſſed with ſolicitations. You will have numbers forced upon you who have no merit; ſome will force them upon you from miſtaken partiality; and ſome from downright intereſted motives, without ſcruple; and you will be diſgraced. For hoſpitality as formerly practiſed, there is no longer the ſame reaſon; heretofore the poorer people were more numerous, and, from want of commerce, their means of getting a livelihood more difficult; therefore the ſupporting them was an act of great benevolence; now that the poor

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can find maintenance for themſelves, and their labour is wanted, a general undiſcerning hoſpitality tends to ill, by withdrawing them from their work to idleneſs and drunkenneſs. Then formerly rents were received in kind, ſo that there was a great abundance of proviſions in poſſeſſion of the owners of the lands, which, ſince the plenty of money afforded by commerce, is no longer the caſe.

" Hoſpitality to ſtrangers and foreigners in our country is now almoſt at an end, ſince, from the increaſe of them that come to us, there have been a ſufficient number of people that have found an intereſt in providing inns and proper accommodations, which is in general a more expedient method for the entertainment of travellers. Where the travellers and ſtrangers are few, more of that hoſpitality ſubſiſts, as it has not been worth while to provide places of accommodation. In Ireland there is ſtill hoſpitality to ſtrangers in ſome degree ; in Hungary and Poland probably more."

Johnſon's openneſs with people at a firſt interview was remarkable. He ſaid once to Mr. Langton, " I think I am like Squire Richard in ' The Journey to London.' *I'm never ſtrange in a ſtrange place.*" He was truly *ſocial*. He ſtrongly cenſured what is much too common in England among perſons of condition—

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maintaining an abſolute ſilence, when unknown to each other; as for inſtance, when occaſionally brought together in a room before the maſter or miſtreſs of the houſe has appeared. "Two men of any other nation who are ſhewn into a room together, at a houſe where they are both viſitors, will immediately find ſome converſation. But two Engliſhmen will probably go each to a different window, and remain in obſtinate ſilence. Sir, we as yet do not enough underſtand the common rights of humanity."

An eminent foreigner, when he was ſhewn the Britiſh Muſeum, was very troubleſome with many abſurd enquiries. "Now there, Sir, (ſaid Johnſon) is the difference between an Engliſhman and a Frenchman. A Frenchman muſt be always talking, whether he knows any thing of the matter or not; an Engliſhman is content to ſay nothing, when he has nothing to ſay."

Johnſon repeated an obſervation of Bathurſt's, appearing to acknowledge it to be well founded, namely, "that it was ſomewhat remarkable how ſeldom, on occaſion of coming into the company of any new perſon, one felt any wiſh or inclination to ſee him again."

Talking of that ſtudied behaviour which many have recommended and practiſed, he diſap-

diſapproved of it, and ſaid, "I never conſidered whether I ſhould be a grave man, or a merry man, but juſt let inclination, for the time, have its courſe."

No man was a more attentive and nice obſerver of behaviour in thoſe in whoſe company he happened to be than Johnſon; or, however ſtrange it may ſeem to many, had a higher eſtimation of its refinements. Lord Eliot ſaid, that one day when Johnſon and he were at dinner at a gentleman's houſe in London, upon Lord Cheſterfield's Letters being mentioned, Johnſon ſurprized the company by this ſentence: "Every man of any education would rather be called a raſcal, than accuſed of deficiency in *the graces*." Mr. Gibbon, who was preſent, turned to a lady who knew Johnſon well, and lived much with him, and in his quaint manner, tapping his box, addreſſed her thus: "Don't you think, Madam (looking towards Johnſon), that among *all* your acquaintance, you could find *one* exception?" The lady ſmiled, and ſeemed to acquieſce.

The difference (he obſerved) between a well bred and an ill bred man is this: "One immediately attracts your liking, the other your averſion. You love the one till you find reaſon to hate him; you hate the other till you find reaſon to love him.

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He ſaid, "General Paoli had the loftieſt port of any man he had ever ſeen." He denied that military men were always the beſt bred men. "Perfect good breeding, he obſerved, conſiſts in having no particular mark of any profeſſion, but a general elegance of manners; whereas in a military man, you can commonly diſtinguiſh the *brand* of a ſoldier, *l'homme d'epée.*"

A foppiſh phyſician once reminded Johnſon of his having been in company with him on a former occaſion. "I do not remember it, Sir." The phyſician ſtill inſiſted, adding that he that day wore ſo fine a coat that it muſt have attracted his notice. "Sir, (ſaid Johnſon) had you been dipt in Pactolus, I ſhould not have noticed you."

Goldſmith one day, to divert ſome tedious minutes, ſtrutted about, bragging of his dreſs, and perhaps was ſeriouſly vain of it, for his mind was wonderfully prone to ſuch impreſſions. "Come, come (ſaid Garrick who was of the party), talk no more of that. You are perhaps the worſt—eh, eh!"—Goldſmith was eagerly attempting to interrupt him, when Garrick went on, laughing ironically, "Nay, you will always *look* like a *gentleman*; but I am talking of being well or ill *dreſt*."—"Well, let me tell you (ſaid Goldſmith) when my taylor

for brought home my bloom-coloured coat, he ſaid, Sir, I have a favour to beg of you. When any body aſks you who made your clothes, be pleaſed to mention John Filby, at the Harrow, in Water-lane."—JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, that was becauſe he knew the ſtrange colour would attract crowds to gaze at it, and thus they might hear of him, and ſee how well he could make a coat even of ſo abſurd a colour."

Johnſon had called twice on the Biſhop of Killaloe before his Lordſhip ſet out for Ireland, having miſſed him the firſt time. He ſaid, "It would have hung heavy on my heart if I had not ſeen him. No man ever paid more attention to another than he has done to me; and I have neglected him, not wilfully, but from being otherwiſe occupied. Always ſet a high value on *ſpontaneous kindneſs*. He, whoſe inclination prompts him to cultivate your friendſhip of his own accord, will love you more than one whom you have been at pains to attach to you."

Johnſon ſaid, that he was once much pleaſed to find that a carpenter, who lived near him, was very ready to ſhew him ſome things in his buſineſs, which he wiſhed to ſee: "it was paying (he ſaid) reſpect to literature."

Of the paſſion of love he remarked, "that its violence and ill effects were much exaggerated;

rated; for who knows any real ſufferings on that head, more than from the exorbitancy of any other paſſion?"

Dr. Taylor's noſe happening to bleed at a time when Johnſon was with him, and Taylor ſaying, that it was becauſe he had omitted to have himſelf blooded four days after a quarter of a year's interval, Johnſon, who was a great dabbler in phyſick, diſapproved much of periodical bleeding; for (ſaid he) you accuſtom yourſelf to an evacuation which Nature cannot perform of herſelf, and therefore ſhe cannot help you, ſhould you, from forgetfulneſs or any other cauſe, omit it; ſo you may be ſuddenly ſuffocated. You may accuſtom yourſelf to other periodical evacuations, becauſe ſhould you omit them, Nature can ſupply the omiſſion; but Nature cannot open a vein to bleed you."—"I do not like to take an emetick (ſaid Taylor) for fear of breaking ſome ſmall veſſels."—"Poh! (ſaid Johnſon) if you have ſo many things that will break, you had better break your neck at once, and there's an end on't. You will break no ſmall veſſels." (blowing with high deriſion).

Having one day aſked Mr. Langton if his father and mother had ſat for their pictures, which he thought it right for each generation of a family to do, and being told that they had

oppoſed it, he ſaid, Sir, among the anfractuoſities of the human mind, I know not if it may not be one, that there is a ſuperſtitious reluctance to ſit for a picture."

Talking of a friend of his aſſociating with perſons of very diſcordant principles and characters, Mr. B. ſaid, that he was a very univerſal man, quite a man of the world.—JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir; but one may be ſo much a man of the world as to be nothing in the world. I remember a paſſage in Goldſmith's 'Vicar of Wakefield,' which he was afterwards fool enough to expunge: 'I do not love a man who is zealous for nothing."—BOSWELL. "That was a fine paſſage."—*J.* "Yes, Sir; there was another fine paſſage too, which he ſtruck out: "When I was a young man, being anxious to diſtinguiſh myſelf, I was perpetually ſtarting new propoſitions: but I ſoon gave this over; for I found that generally what was new was falſe." Mr. B. ſaid he did not like to ſit with people of whom he had not a good opinion.—*J.* "But you muſt not indulge your delicacy too much; or you will be a *tête à tête* man all your life."

When Mr. Veſey was propoſed as a member of the LITERARY CLUB, Mr. Burke began by ſaying that he was a man of gentle manners. "Sir, ſaid Johnſon, you need ſay no more.

When you have ſaid a man of gentle manners, you have ſaid enough."

The late Mr. Fitzherbert told Mr. Langton that Johnſon ſaid to him, "Sir, a man has no more right to *ſay* an uncivil thing, than to *act* one; no more right to ſay a rude thing to another than to knock him down."

On ſome occaſion he obſerved, "Though many men are nominally entruſted with the adminiſtration of hoſpitals and other publick inſtitutions, almoſt all the good is done by one man, by whom the reſt are driven on; owing to confidence in him, and indolence in them."

Speaking of a gentleman whoſe houſe was much frequented by low company, "Rags (ſaid he) will always make their appearance where they have a right to do it."

Of the ſame gentleman's mode of living, he ſaid, "The ſervants, inſtead of doing what they are bid, ſtand round the table in idle cluſters, gaping upon the gueſts; and ſeem as unfit to attend a company, as to ſteer a man of war."

He remarked, "that a man ſhould paſs a part of his time with *the laughers*, by which means any thing ridiculous or particular about him might be preſented to his view, and corrected." Mr. Boſwell obſerved, that he muſt have been a bold laugher who would have

ventured to tell Dr. Johnſon of any of his particularities.

"There is (ſaid Johnſon) a wicked inclination in moſt people to ſuppoſe an old man decayed in his intellects. If a young or middle aged man, when leaving a company, does not recollect where he laid his hat it is nothing; but if the ſame inattention is diſcovered in an old man, people will ſhrug up their ſhoulders, and ſay, 'His memory is going.'"

Of a certain noble Lord he ſaid, "Reſpect him you could not; for he had no mind of his own: love him you could not; for that which you could do with him, every one elſe could."

Being aſked by a young nobleman, what was become of the gallantry and military ſpirit of the old Engliſh nobility, he replied, "Why, my Lord, I'll tell you what is become of it; it is gone into the city to look for a fortune."

Speaking of a dull tireſome fellow, whom he chanced to meet, he ſaid, "That fellow ſeems to me to poſſeſs but one idea, and that is a wrong one."

To a correſpondent who had been tardy in his communications, he wrote thus: "Are you playing the ſame trick again, and trying who can keep ſilence longeſt? Remember that all tricks are either knaviſh or childiſh; and that it is as fooliſh to make experiments upon the

the conſtancy of a friend, as upon the chaſtity of a wife. What can be the cauſe of this ſecond fit of ſilence, I cannot conjecture; but after one trick, I will not be cheated by another, nor will haraſs my thoughts with conjectures about the motives of a man who probably acts only by caprice."

He one day obſerved to Sir William Scott, "The age is running mad after innovation; all the buſineſs of the world is to be done in a new way; men are to be hanged in a new way; Tyburn itſelf is not ſafe from the fury of innovation." It having been argued that this was an improvement, "No, Sir (ſaid he eagerly), it is *not* an improvement: they object that the old method drew together a number of ſpectators;—Sir, executions are intended to draw ſpectators. If they do not draw ſpectators, they do not anſwer the purpoſe. The old method was moſt ſatisfactory to all parties; the public was gratified by a proceſſion; the criminal was ſupported by it. Why is all this to be ſwept away *?"

He ſaid, "Mankind have a ſtrong attachment to the habitations to which they have

* "I perfectly agree (ſays Mr. Boſwell) with Dr. Johnſon upon this head, and am perſuaded that executions now, the ſolemn proceſſion being diſcontinued, have not nearly the effect which they formerly had. Magiſtrates, both in London, and elſewhere, have, I am afraid, in this had too much regard to their own eaſe."

been accuſtomed. You ſee the inhabitants of Norway do not with one conſent quit it, and go to ſome part of America, where there is a mild climate, and where they may have the ſame produce from land, with the tenth part of the labour. No, Sir; their affection for their old dwellings, and the terror of a general change, keep them at home. Thus we ſee many of the fineſt ſpots in the world thinly inhabited, and many rugged ſpots well inhabited."

"Madneſs (he ſaid on ſome other occaſion) frequently diſcovers itſelf merely by unneceſſary deviation from the uſual modes of the world. My poor friend Smart ſhewed the diſturbance of his mind, by falling upon his knees, and ſaying his prayers in the ſtreet, or in any other unuſual place. Now although, rationally ſpeaking, it is greater madneſs not to pray at all, than to pray as Smart did, I am afraid there are ſo many who do not pray, that their underſtanding is not called in queſtion."

In a converſation on gaming, a gentleman animadverted on it with ſeverity. "Nay, gentlemen (ſaid Johnſon), let us not aggravate the matter. It is not roguery to play with a man who is ignorant of the game, while you are maſter of it, and ſo win his money; for he thinks he can play better than you, as you think you can play better than he; and the ſuperior

ſuperior ſkill carries it." ERSKINE. He is a fool, but you are not a rogue."—JOHNSON. "That's much about the truth, Sir. It muſt be conſidered, that a man who only does what every one of the ſociety to which he belongs would do, is not a diſhoneſt man. In the republic of Sparta it was agreed, that ſtealing was not diſhonourable, if not diſcovered. I do not commend a ſociety where there is an agreement that what would not otherwiſe be fair, ſhall be fair; but I maintain, that an individual of any ſociety, who practiſes what is allowed, is not a diſhoneſt man."—BOSWELL. "So then, Sir, you do not think ill of a man who wins perhaps forty thouſand pounds in a winter?"—*J.* "Sir, I do not call a gameſter a diſhoneſt man; but I call him an unſocial man, an unprofitable man. Gaming is a mode of transferring property without producing any intermediate good. Trade gives employment to numbers, and ſo produces intermediate good."

Talking of a gentleman who was ſuppoſed to be gradually involving his circumſtances by bad management, Johnſon ſaid to Mr. B. "Waſting a fortune is evaporation by a thouſand imperceptible means. If it were a ſtream, they'd ſtop it. You muſt ſpeak to him. It is really miſerable. Were he a gameſter, it could be ſaid he had hopes of winning. Were he a bankrupt in

trade, he might have grown rich; but he has neither ſpirit to ſpend, nor reſolution to ſpare. He does not ſpend faſt enough to have pleaſure from it; he has the crime of prodigality, and the wretchedneſs of parſimony. If a man is killed in a duel, he is killed as many a one has been killed; but it is a ſad thing for a man to lie down and die; to bleed to death, becauſe he has not fortitude enough to ſear the wound, or even to ſtitch it up."

Once when checking Mr. Boſwell for boaſting too frequently of himſelf in company, he ſaid, "Boſwell, you often vaunt ſo much as to provoke ridicule. You put me in mind of a man who was ſtanding in the kitchen of an inn with his back to the fire, and thus accoſted the perſon next him: 'Do you know, Sir, who I am?' 'No, Sir (ſaid the other), I have not that advantage.'—"Sir (ſaid he), I am the *great Twalmley* who invented the New Floodgate box-iron." The Biſhop of Killaloe on hearing the ſtory defended Twalmley, by obſerving, that he was entitled to the epithet of *great*; for Virgil in his groupe of worthies in the Elyſian fields—

Hic manus ob patriam pugnando vulnera paſſi, &c.

mentions

Inventas aut qui vitam excoluere per artes.

Mr.

Mr. Boſwell mentioned a young man who was going to Jamaica with his wife and children, in expectation of being provided for by two of her brothers ſettled in that iſland, one a clergyman, and the other a phyſician. "It is (ſaid Johnſon) a wild ſcheme, Sir, unleſs he has a poſitive and deliberate invitation. There was a poor girl, who uſed to come about me, who had a couſin in Barbadoes, that, in a letter to her, expreſſed a wiſh ſhe would come out to that Iſland, and expatiated on the comforts and happineſs of her ſituation. The poor girl went out: her couſin was much ſurpriſed, and aſked her how ſhe could think of coming. 'Becauſe (ſaid ſhe) you invited me.'—'Not I,' anſwered the couſin. The letter was then produced. 'I ſee it is true (ſaid ſhe) that I did invite you: but I did not think you would come.' They lodged her in an out-houſe, where ſhe paſſed her time miſerably: and as ſoon as ſhe had an opportunity, ſhe returned to England. Always tell this, when you hear of people going abroad to relations, upon a notion of being well received. In the caſe which you mention, it is probable the clergyman ſpends all he gets, and the phyſician does not know how much he is to get."

On another occaſion Johnſon obſerved, "A man is very apt to complain of the ingratitude of

of thoſe who have riſen far above him. A man when he gets into a higher ſphere, into other habits of life, cannot keep up all his former connections. Then, Sir, thoſe who knew him formerly upon a level with themſelves, may think that they ought ſtill to be treated as on a level, which cannot be; and an acquaintance in a former ſituation may bring out things which it would be very diſagreeable to have mentioned before higher company, though, perhaps, every body knows of them."— He placed this ſubject in a new light, and ſhewed that a man who has riſen in the world muſt not be condemned too harſhly for being diſtant to former acquaintance, even though he may have been much obliged to them. It is, no doubt, to be wiſhed (as Mr. B. juſtly remarks) that a proper degree of attention ſhould be ſhewn by great men to their early friends; but if either from obtuſe inſenſibility to difference of ſituation, or preſumptuous forwardneſs, which will not ſubmit even to an exterior obſervance of it, the dignity of high place cannot be preſerved, when they are admitted into the company of thoſe raiſed above the ſtate in which they once were, encroachment muſt be repelled, and the kinder feelings ſacrificed.

A queſtion was ſtarted, how far people who diſagree in a capital point can live in friendſhip together. Johnſon ſaid they might. Goldſmith

ſmith ſaid they could not, as they had not the *idem velle atque idem nolle*—the ſame likings and the ſame averſions.—*J.* "Why, Sir, you muſt ſhun the ſubject as to which you diſagree. For inſtance, I can live very well with Burke; I love his knowledge, his genius, his diffuſion, and affluence of converſation; but I would not talk to him of the Rockingham party."—*G.* "But, Sir, when people live together who have ſomething as to which they diſagree, and which they want to ſhun, they will be in the ſituation mentioned in the ſtory of Bluebeard, 'you may look into all the chambers but one;' but we ſhould have the greateſt inclination to look into that chamber; to talk of that ſubject."—*J.* (with a loud voice) "Sir, I am not ſaying that *you* could live in friendſhip with a man from whom you differ as to ſome point; I am only ſaying that *I* could do it."

On the caſuiſtical queſtion, whether it was allowable at any time to depart from *Truth?* Johnſon obſerved, "The general rule is, that Truth ſhould never be violated, becauſe it is of the utmoſt importance to the comfort of life, that we ſhould have a full ſecurity by mutual faith; and occaſional inconveniencies ſhould be willingly ſuffered that we may preſerve it. There muſt, however, be ſome exceptions.—If, for inſtance, a murderer ſhould aſk you which way a man is gone, you may tell him what

what is not true, becauſe you are under a previous obligation not to betray a man to a murderer."—BOSWELL. "Suppoſing the perſon who wrote *Junius* were aſked whether he was the author, might he deny it?"—*J.* "I don't know what to ſay to this. If you were *ſure* that he wrote *Junius*, would you, if he denied it, think as well of him afterwards? Yet it may be urged, that what a man has no right to aſk, you may refuſe to communicate; and there is no other effectual mode of preſerving a ſecret, and an important ſecret, the diſcovery of which may be very hurtful to you, but by a flat denial; for if you are ſilent, or heſitate, or evade, it will be held equivalent to a confeſſion. But ſtay, Sir: here is another caſe. Suppoſing the author had told me confidentially that he had written *Junius*, and I were aſked if he had, I ſhould hold myſelf at liberty to deny it, as being under a previous promiſe, expreſs or implied, to conceal it. Now what I ought to do for the author, may I not do for myſelf? But I deny the lawfulneſs of telling a lie to a ſick man, for fear of alarming him. You have no buſineſs with conſequences; you are to tell the truth. Beſides, you are not ſure what effect your telling him that he is in danger may have. It may bring his diſtemper to a criſis, and that may cure him. Of all lying, I have the greateſt abhorrence of this, becauſe

becauſe I believe it has been frequently practiſed on myſelf. *"

Johnſon's notion of the duty of a member of Parliament, ſitting upon an election-committee, was very high; and when he was told of a gentleman upon one of thoſe committees, who read the newſpapers part of the time, and ſlept the reſt, while the merits of a vote were examined by the counſel, and as an excuſe, when challenged by the chairman for ſuch behaviour, bluntly anſwered, "I had made up my mind upon that caſe;"—Johnſon, with an indignant contempt, ſaid, "If he was ſuch a rogue as to make up his mind upon a caſe without hearing it, he ſhould not have been ſuch a fool as to tell it."—"I think (ſaid a gentleman preſent) the Doctor has pretty plainly made him out to be both rogue and fool."

Talking of publick ſpeaking, Johnſon ſaid, "We muſt not eſtimate a man's powers by his being able or not able to deliver his ſenti-

* "I cannot help thinking (ſays Mr. B.) that there is much weight in the opinion of thoſe who have held, that Truth, as an eternal and immutable principle, ought, upon no account whatever, to be violated, from ſuppoſed previous or ſuperior obligations, of which every man being to judge for himſelf, there is great danger that we too often, from partial motives, perſuade ourſelves that they exiſt; and probably whatever extraordinary inſtances may ſometimes occur, where ſome evil may be prevented by violating this noble principle, it would be found that human happineſs would, upon the whole, be more perfect were Truth univerſally preſerved."

ments

ments in public. Iſaac Hawkins Browne, one of the firſt wits of this country, got into Parliament, and never opened his mouth. For my own part, I think it is more diſgraceful never to try to ſpeak, than to try it, and fail; as it is more diſgraceful not to fight, than to fight and be beaten."—This argument appeared to Mr. Boſwell to be fallacious; for if a man has not ſpoken, it may be ſaid that he would have done very well, if he had tried; whereas, if he has tried and failed, there is nothing to be ſaid for him. "Why then (he aſked) is it thought diſgraceful for a man not to fight, and not diſgraceful not to ſpeak in public?"—*J.* "Becauſe there may be other reaſons for a man's not ſpeaking in public than want of reſolution: he may have nothing to ſay (laughing). Whereas, Sir, you know courage is reckoned the greateſt of all virtues; becauſe, unleſs a man has that virtue, he has no ſecurity for preſerving any other."

The converſation turned upon war. Johnſon ſaid, "Every man thinks meanly of himſelf for not having been a ſoldier, or not having been at ſea."—BOSWELL. "Lord Mansfield does not."—JOHNSON. "Sir, if Lord Mansfield were in a company of General Officers and Admirals who have been in ſervice, he would ſhrink; he'd wiſh to creep under the table."—*B.* "No; he'd think he could *try* them

them all."—*J.* "Yes, if he could catch them; but they'd try him much ſooner. No, Sir; were Socrates and Charles the Twelfth of Sweden both preſent in any company, and Socrates to ſay, 'Follow me, and hear a lecture in philoſophy;' and Charles, laying his hand on his ſword, to ſay, 'Follow me, and dethrone the Czar;' a man would be aſhamed to follow Socrates. Sir, the impreſſion is univerſal: yet it is ſtrange. As to the ſailor, when you look down from the quarter-deck to the ſpace below, you ſee the utmoſt extremity of human miſery; ſuch crowding, ſuch filth, ſuch ſtench!"—*B.* "Yet ſailors are happy."—*J.* "They are happy as brutes are happy, with a piece of freſh meat, with the groſſeſt ſenſuality. But, Sir, the profeſſion of ſoldiers and ſailors has the dignity of danger. Mankind reverence thoſe who have got over fear, which is ſo general a weakneſs."—SCOTT. "But is not courage mechanical, and to be acquired!"—*J.* "Why, yes, Sir, in a collective ſenſe. Soldiers conſider themſelves only as parts of a great machine."—*S.* "We find people fond of being ſailors.—*J.* "I cannot account for that, any more than I can account for other ſtrange perverſions of imagination."

His abhorrence of the profeſſion of a ſailor was uniformly violent; but in converſation he always exalted the profeſſion of a ſoldier.

Talking

Talking of fame, for which there is ſo great a deſire, Mr. Boſwell obſerved how little there was of it in reality, compared with the other objects of human attention. "Let every man recollect, and he will be ſenſible how ſmall a part of his time is employed in talking or thinking of Shakeſpeare, Voltaire, or any of the moſt celebrated men that have ever lived, or are now ſuppoſed to occupy the attention and admiration of the world. Let this be extracted and compreſſed; into what a narrow ſpace will it go!" He then ſlily introduced Mr. Garrick's fame, and his aſſuming the airs of a great man.—JOHNSON. "Sir, it is wonderful how *little* Garrick aſſumes. No, Sir, Garrick *fortunam reverenter habet.* Conſider, Sir: celebrated men, ſuch as you have mentioned, have had their applauſe at a diſtance; but Garrick had it daſhed in his face, ſounded in his ears, and went home every night with the plaudits of a thouſand in his *cranium.* Then, Sir, Garrick did not *find*, but *made* his way to the tables, the levees, and almoſt the bed-chambers of the great. Then, Sir, Garrick had under him a numerous body of people; who, from fear of his power, hopes of his favour, and admiration of his talents, were conſtantly ſubmiſſive to him. And here is a man who has advanced the dignity of his profeſſion. Garrick has made a player a higher

higher character.—Scott. "And he is a very ſprightly writer too."—*J.* "Yes, Sir; and all this ſupported by great wealth of his own acquiſition. If all this had happened to me, I ſhould have had a couple of fellows with long poles walking before me, to knock down every body that ſtood in the way. Conſider, if all this had happened to Cibber or Quin, they'd have jumped over the moon. Yet Garrick ſpeaks to *us* (ſmiling)."—*B.* "And Garrick is a very good man, a charitable man."—*J.* "Sir, a liberal man. He has given away more money than any man in England. There may be a little vanity mixed; but he has ſhewn that money is not his firſt object.—*B.* "Yet Foote uſed to ſay of him, that he walked out with an intention to do a generous action; but, turning the corner of a ſtreet, he met with the ghoſt of a halfpenny, which frightened him.—*J.* "Why, Sir, that is very true, too; for I never knew a man of whom it could be ſaid with leſs certainty to-day, what he will do to-morrow, than Garrick; it depends ſo much on his humour at the time."—*S.* "I am glad to hear of his liberality. He has been repreſented as very ſaving."—*J.* "With his domeſtic ſaving we have nothing to do. I remember drinking tea with him long ago, when Peg Woffington made it, and he grumbled at her for making it too ſtrong. He had

then begun to feel money in his purſe, and did not know when he ſhould have enough of it."

Talking of employment being abſolutely neceſſary to preſerve the mind from wearying and growing fretful, eſpecially in thoſe who have a tendency to melancholy, a ſaying was mentioned of an American ſavage, who, when an European was expatiating on all the advantages of money, put this queſtion, "Will it purchaſe *occupation?*"—JOHNSON. "Depend upon it, Sir, this ſaying is too refined for a ſavage. And Sir, money *will* purchaſe occupation; it will purchaſe all the conveniencies of life; it will purchaſe variety of company; it will purchaſe all ſorts of entertainment."

Mr. Boſwell ſpoke of the difficulty of riſing in the morning. Dr. Johnſon told him, "that the learned Mrs. Carter, at that period when ſhe was eager in ſtudy, did not awake as early as ſhe wiſhed; and ſhe therefore had a contrivance, that, at a certain hour, her chamber-light ſhould burn a ſtring to which a heavy weight was ſuſpended, which then fell with a ſtrong ſudden noiſe: this rouſed her from ſleep, and then ſhe had no difficulty in getting up." But Mr. B. ſaid, *that* was his difficulty; and wiſhed there could be ſome medicine invented which would make one riſe without pain, which he never did, unleſs after lying in bed a very long

long time. Perhaps there might be ſomething in the ſtores of nature which could do this. He would have ſomething that could diſſipate the *vis inertiæ*, and give elaſticity to the muſcles *.

Johnſon obſerved, that "a man ſhould take a ſufficient quantity of ſleep, which Dr. Mead ſays is between ſeven and nine hours." He was told that Dr. Cullen had ſaid, that a man ſhould not take more ſleep than he can take at once.—"This rule, Sir (remarked Johnſon), cannot hold in all caſes; for many people have their ſleep broken by ſickneſs; and ſurely, Cullen would not have a man to get up after having ſlept but an hour. Such a regimen would ſoon end in a *long ſleep*." Dr. Taylor remarked, that "a man who does not feel an inclination to ſleep at the ordinary time, inſtead of being ſtronger than other people, muſt not be well; for a man in health has all the natural inclinations to eat, drink, and ſleep, in a ſtrong degree."

At a ſupper once Johnſon talked of good eating with uncommon ſatisfaction. "Some people

* "As I imagine (ſays Mr. B.) that the human body may be put, by the operation of other ſubſtances, into any ſtate in which it has ever been; and as I have experienced a ſtate in which riſing from bed was not diſagreeable, but eaſy, nay, ſometimes agreeable; I ſuppoſe that this ſtate may be produced, if we knew by what. We can heat the body, we can cool it; we can give it tenſion or relaxation; and ſurely it is poſſible to bring it into a ſtate in which riſing from bed will not be a pain."

(ſaid he) have a fooliſh way of not minding, or pretending not to mind, what they eat. For my part I mind my belly very ſtudiouſly, and very carefully, for I look upon it, that he who does not mind his belly will hardly mind any thing elſe." He now appeared *Jean Bull Philoſophe*, and was, for the moment, not only ſerious but vehement.—" Yet (adds Mr. Boſwell) I have heard him, upon other occaſions, talk with great contempt of people who were anxious to gratify their palates; and the 206th number of his Rambler is a maſterly eſſay againſt guloſity.—His practice, indeed, I muſt acknowledge, may be conſidered as caſting the balance of his different opinions upon this ſubject; for I never knew any man who reliſhed good eating more than he did. When at table, he was totally abſorbed in the buſineſs of the moment: his looks ſeemed riveted to his plate; nor would he, unleſs when in very high company, ſay one word, or even pay the leaſt attention to what was ſaid by others, till he had ſatisfied his appetite, which was ſo fierce, and indulged with ſuch intenſeneſs, that while in the act of eating, the veins of his forehead ſwelled, and generally a ſtrong perſpiration was viſible. To thoſe whoſe ſenſations were delicate, this could not but be diſguſting; and it was doubtleſs not very ſuitable to the character of a philoſopher, who

who ſhould be diſtinguiſhed by ſelf-command. But it muſt be owned that Johnſon, though he could be rigidly *abſtemious*, was not a *temperate* man either in eating or drinking. He could refrain, but he could not uſe moderately. He told me, that he had faſted two days without inconvenience, and that he had never been hungry but once. They who beheld with wonder how much he ate upon all occaſions when his dinner was to his taſte, could not eaſily conceive what he muſt have meant by hunger; and not only was he remarkable for the extraordinary quantity which he ate, but he was, or affected to be, a man of very nice diſcernment in the ſcience of cookery. He uſed to deſcant critically on the diſhes which had been at table where he had dined or ſupped, and to recollect very minutely what he had liked. I remember, when he was in Scotland, his praiſing '*Gordon's palates*,' (a diſh of palates at the Honourable Alexander Gordon's) with a warmth of expreſſion which might have done honour to more important ſubjects. 'As for Maclaurin's imitation of a *made diſh*, it was a wretched attempt.' He about the ſame time was ſo much diſpleaſed with the performances of a nobleman's French cook, that he exclaimed with vehemence, 'I'd throw ſuch a raſcal into the river;' and he then proceeded to alarm

a lady at whoſe houſe he was to ſup, by the following manifeſto of his ſkill: 'I, Madam, who live at a variety of good tables, am a much better judge of cookery than any perſon who has a very tolerable cook, but lives much at home; for his palate is gradually adapted to the taſte of his cook; whereas, Madam, in trying by a wider range, I can more exquiſitely judge.' When invited to dine, even with an intimate friend, he was not pleaſed if ſomething better than a plain dinner was not prepared for him. I have heard him ſay on ſuch an occaſion, 'This was a good dinner enough, to be ſure; but it was not a dinner to aſk a man to.' On the other hand, he was wont to expreſs, with great glee, his ſatisfaction when he had been entertained quite to his mind.—One day, when he had dined with his neighbour and landlord in Bolt-court, Mr. Allen, the printer, whoſe old houſekeeper had ſtudied his taſte in every thing, he pronounced this eulogy, 'Sir, we could not have had a better dinner had there been a *Synod of Cooks*.'

He uſually defended luxury: "You cannot (ſaid he) ſpend money in luxury without doing good to the poor. Nay, you do more good to them by ſpending it in luxury than by giving it; for by ſpending it in luxury you make them exert induſtry, whereas by giving it you

you keep them idle. I own, indeed, there may be more virtue in giving it immediately in charity than in ſpending it in luxury, though there may be pride in that too." Miſs Seward, who was preſent, aſked if this was not Mandeville's doctrine of "private vices public benefits."—JOHNSON. "The fallacy of that book is, that Mandeville defines neither vices nor benefits. He reckons among vices every thing that gives pleaſure. He takes the narroweſt ſyſtem of morality, monaſtic morality, which holds pleaſure itſelf to be a vice; ſuch as eating ſalt with our fiſh, becauſe it makes it eat better; and he reckons wealth as a public benefit, which is by no means always true. Pleaſure of itſelf is not a vice. Having a garden, which we all know to be perfectly innocent, is a great pleaſure. At the ſame time, in this ſtate of being, there are many pleaſures vices, which however are ſo immediately agreeable that we can hardly abſtain from them. The happineſs of Heaven will be, that pleaſure and virtue will be perfectly conſiſtent. Mandeville puts the caſe of a man who gets drunk at an alehouſe; and ſays it is a public benefit, becauſe ſo much money is got by it to the public. But it muſt be conſidered, that all the good gained by this, through the gradation of alehouſe-keeper, brewer, maltſter, and farmer, is overbalanced

by the evil cauſed to the man and his family by his getting drunk. This is the way to try what is vicious, by aſcertaining whether more evil than good is produced by it upon the whole, which is the caſe in all vice. It may happen that good is produced by vice but not as vice; for inſtance, a robber may take money from its owner, and give it to one who will make a better uſe of it. Here is good produced; but not by the robbery as robbery, but as tranſlation of property. I read Mandeville forty, or, I believe, fifty years ago. He did not puzzle me; he opened my views into real life very much. No, it is clear that the happineſs of ſociety depends on virtue. In Sparta theft was allowed by general conſent; theft, therefore, was *there* not a crime, but then there was no ſecurity; and what a life muſt they have had when there was no ſecurity. Without truth there muſt be a diſſolution of ſociety. As it is, there is ſo little truth that we are almoſt afraid to truſt our ears; but how ſhould we be if falſehood were multiplied ten times? Society is held together by communication and information; and I remember this remark of Sir Thomas Brown's, 'Do the devils lie? No; for then Hell could not ſubſiſt.'

"Many things which are falſe are tranſmitted from book to book, and gain credit in the world. One of theſe is the cry againſt the evil

of

of luxury. Now the truth is, that luxury produces much good. Take the luxury of buildings in London. Does it not produce real advantages in the conveniency and elegance of accommodation, and this all from the exertion of induſtry? People will tell you, with a melancholy face, how many builders are in gaol. It is plain they are in gaol, not for building; for rents are not fallen. A man gives half a guinea for a diſh of green peas. How much gardening does this occaſion? how many labourers muſt the competition to have ſuch things early in the market keep in employment? You will hear it ſaid, very gravely, "Why was not the half-guinea, thus ſpent in luxury, given to the poor? To how many might it have afforded a good meal. Alas! has it not gone to the induſtrious poor, whom it is better to ſupport than the idle poor? You are much ſurer that you are doing good when you *pay* money to thoſe who work, as the recompence of their labour, than when you *give* money merely in charity. Suppoſe the ancient luxury of a diſh of peacock's brains were to be revived, how many carcaſes would be left to the poor at a cheap rate? And as to the rout that is made about people who are ruined by extravagance, it is no matter to the nation that ſome individuals ſuffer. When ſo much general productive

ductive exertion is the conſequence of luxury, the nation does not care though there are debtors in gaol; nay, they would not care though their creditors were there too."

DUELLING.

MR. BOSWELL, in a converſation with Gen. Oglethorpe, Johnſon, and Goldſmith, ſtarted the queſtion whether duelling was conſiſtent with moral duty. The brave old General fired at this, and ſaid, with a lofty air, "Undoubtedly a man has a right to defend his honour."—GOLDSMITH (turning to Mr. B.) "I aſk you firſt, Sir, what would you do if you were affronted?" He anſwered that he ſhould think it neceſſary to fight.—"Why then (replied Goldſmith) that ſolves the queſtion."—JOHNSON. "No, Sir, it does not ſolve the queſtion. It does not follow that what a man would do is therefore right."—Mr. *B.* "I wiſhed to have it ſettled whether duelling was contrary to the laws of Chriſtianity." Johnſon immediately entered on the ſubject, and treated it in a maſterly manner. His thoughts were theſe: "As men become in a high degree refined, various cauſes of

of offence ariſe, which are conſidered to be of ſuch importance, that life muſt be ſtaked to atone for them, though in reality they are not ſo. A body that has received a very fine poliſh may be eaſily hurt. Before men arrive at this artificial refinement, if one tells his neighbour he lies, his neighbour tells him he lies; if one gives his neighbour a blow, his neighbour gives him a blow: but in a ſtate of highly-poliſhed ſociety, an affront is held to be a ſerious injury. It muſt, therefore, be reſented, or rather a duel muſt be fought upon it; as men have agreed to baniſh from their ſociety one who puts up with an affront without fighting a duel. Now, Sir, it is never unlawful to fight in ſelf defence. He, then, who fights a duel, does not fight from paſſion againſt his antagoniſt, but out of ſelf defence, to avert the ſtigma of the world, and to prevent himſelf from being driven out of ſociety. I could wiſh there was not that ſuperfluity of refinement; but while ſuch notions prevail, no doubt a man may lawfully fight a duel."

This juſtification is applicable only to the perſon who *receives* an affront. All mankind muſt condemn the aggreſſor.

The General ſaid, that when he was a very young man, only fifteen, ſerving under Prince Eugene of Savoy, he was ſitting in a company at

at table with a Prince of Wirtemberg. The Prince took up a glaſs of wine, and, by a fillip, made ſome of it fly in Oglethorpe's face. Here was a nice dilemma. To have challenged him inſtantly might have fixed a quarrelſome character upon the young ſoldier: to have taken no notice of it might have been conſidered as cowardice. Oglethorpe therefore, keeping his eye upon the Prince, and ſmiling all the time, as if he took what his Highneſs had done in jeſt, ſaid, in French, "That's a good joke; but we do it much better in England;" and threw a whole glaſs of wine in the Prince's face. An old General who ſat by, ſaid, '*Il a bien fait; mon Prince, vous l'avez commencé*;' and thus all ended in good humour."

At another time Johnſon defended duelling, and put his argument upon what is perhaps the moſt ſolid baſis; namely, that if public war be allowed to be conſiſtent with morality, private war muſt be equally ſo *.

* Indeed (ſays Mr. Boſwell) we may obſerve what ſtrained arguments are uſed to reconcile war with the Chriſtian religion. But, in my opinion, it is exceedingly clear, that duelling, having better reaſons for its barbarous violence, is more juſtifiable than war, in which thouſands go forth, without any cauſe of perſonal quarrel, and maſſacre each other."

WOMEN.

WOMEN.

JOHNSON thought portrait-painting an improper employment for a woman. "Public practice of any art (he obſerved), and ſtaring in men's faces, is very indelicate in a female."

He remarked once, at Sir Joſhua Reynolds's, "that a beggar in the ſtreet will more readily aſk alms from a *man*, though there ſhould be no marks of wealth in his appearance, than from even a well-dreſſed *woman*; which he accounted for from the greater degree of carefulneſs as to money that is to be found in women; ſaying farther upon it, that the opportunities in general that they poſſeſs of improving their condition are much fewer than men have; and adding, as he looked round the company, which conſiſted of men only, there is not one of us who does not think he might be richer if he would uſe his endeavour."

He talked with ſerious concern of a certain female friend's "laxity of narration, and inattention to truth."—"I am as much vexed (ſaid he) at the eaſe with which ſhe hears it mentioned to her, as at the thing itſelf. I told her, 'Madam, you are contented to hear every day ſaid to you, what the higheſt of mankind have died rather than bear.'—You know, Mr. Boſ-

well, the higheſt of mankind have died rather than bear to be told they have uttered a falſehood. Do talk to her of it: I am weary."

The wife of one of his acquaintance had fraudulently made a purſe for herſelf out of her huſband's fortune. Feeling a proper compunction in her laſt moments, ſhe confeſſed how much ſhe had ſecreted; but before ſhe could tell where it was placed, ſhe was ſeized with a convulſive fit, and expired. Her huſband ſaid, he was more hurt by her want of confidence in him, than by the loſs of his money. "I told him (ſaid Johnſon) that he ſhould conſole himſelf; for *perhaps* the money might be *found*, and he was *ſure* that his wife was *loſt*."

Mr. Boſwell once ſtated to him this caſe:—"Suppoſe a man has a daughter, who he knows has been ſeduced, but her misfortune is concealed from the world, ſhould he keep her in his houſe? Would he not, by doing ſo, be acceſſary to impoſition? And, perhaps, a worthy unſuſpecting man might come and marry this woman, unleſs the father inform him of the truth."—Johnſon replied, "Sir, he is acceſſary to no impoſition. His daughter is in his houſe; and if a man courts her, he takes his chance.—If a friend, or, indeed, if any man aſks his opinion whether he ſhould marry her, he ought to adviſe him againſt it, without telling why, be-

cauſe

cauſe his real opinion is then required. Or, if he has other daughters who know of her frailty, he ought not to keep her in his houſe. You are to conſider, the ſtate of life is this; we are to judge of one another's characters as well as we can; and a man is not bound, in honeſty or honour, to tell us the faults of his daughter or of himſelf. A man who has debauched his friend's daughter is not obliged to ſay to every body—'Take care of me; don't let me into your houſes without ſuſpicion. I once debauched a friend's daughter. I may debauch yours."

As Johnſon was a zealous friend of ſubordination, he was at all times watchful to repreſs the vulgar cant againſt the manners of the great. —"High people, Sir (ſaid he), are the beſt.—Take a hundred ladies of quality, you'll find them better wives, better mothers, more willing to ſacrifice their own pleaſure to their children, than a hundred other women. Tradeſwomen (I mean the wives of tradeſmen) in the city, who are worth from ten to fifteen thouſand pounds, are the worſt creatures upon the earth; groſsly ignorant, and thinking vicioufneſs faſhionable. Farmers, I think, are often worthleſs fellows.—Few lords will cheat; and, if they do, they'll be aſhamed of it; farmers cheat, and are not aſhamed of it: they have all the ſenſual vices, too,

too, of the nobility, with cheating into the bargain. There is as much fornication and adultery amongſt farmers as amongſt noblemen."—*B.* "The notion of the world, Sir, however, is, that the morals of women of quality are worſe than thoſe in lower ſtations."—*J.* "Yes, Sir; the licentiouſneſs of one woman of quality makes more noiſe than that of a number of women in lower ſtations. Then, Sir, you are to conſider the malignity of women in the city againſt women of quality, which will make them believe any thing of them, ſuch as that they call their coachmen to their bed. No, Sir; ſo far as I have obſerved, the higher in rank, the richer ladies are, they are the better inſtructed, and the more virtuous."

INEQUALITIES OF RANK.

JOHNSON inſiſted much on the duty of maintaining ſubordination of rank.—"Sir (ſaid he), I would no more deprive a nobleman of his reſpect, than of his money. I conſider myſelf as acting a part in the great ſyſtem of ſociety, and I do to others as I would have them do to me. I would behave to a nobleman as I ſhould expect

expect he would behave to me, were I a nobleman and he Sam. Johnſon. Sir, there is one Mrs. Macaulay in this town, a great republican. One day, when I was at her houſe, I put on a very grave countenance, and ſaid to her, 'Madam, I am now become a convert to your way of thinking. I am convinced that all mankind are upon an equal footing; and to give you an unqueſtionable proof, Madam, that I am in earneſt, here is a very ſenſible, civil, well-behaved fellow-citizen, your footman; I deſire that he may be allowed to ſit down and dine with us.' I thus, Sir, ſhewed her the abſurdity of the levelling doctrine. She has never liked me ſince. Sir, your levellers wiſh to level *down* as far as themſelves; but they cannot bear levelling *up* to themſelves. They would all have ſome people under them; why not then have ſome people above them?" A certain author was mentioned, who diſguſted by his forwardneſs, and by ſhewing no deference to noblemen into whoſe company he was admitted. Johnſon ſaid, "Suppoſe a ſhoemaker ſhould claim an equality with him, as he does with a lord, how would he ſtare!—'Why, Sir, do you ſtare (ſays the ſhoemaker)? I do great ſervice to ſociety. 'Tis true, I am paid for doing it; but ſo are you, Sir: and I am ſorry to ſay it, better paid than I am, for doing ſomething not

neceſſary; for mankind could do better without your books, than without my ſhoes.' Thus there would be a perpetual ſtruggle for precedence, were there no fixed invariable rules for the diſtinction of rank, which creates no jealouſy, as it is allowed to be accidental."

On another occaſion (ſays Mr. B.) we had talked of old families, and the reſpect due to them. Johnſon ſaid, "Sir, you have a right to that kind of reſpect, and are arguing for yourſelf. I am for ſupporting the principle, and am diſintereſted in doing it, as I have no ſuch right."—*B.* "Why, Sir, it is one more incitement to a man to do well."—*J.* "Yes, Sir, and it is a matter of opinion very neceſſary to keep ſociety together. What is it but opinion by which we have a reſpect for authority, that prevents us, who are the rabble, from riſing up, and pulling down you who are gentlemen from your places, and ſaying, 'We will be gentlemen in our turn!' Now, Sir, that reſpect for authority is much more eaſily granted to a man whoſe father has had it, than to an upſtart; and ſo ſociety is more eaſily ſupported."—*B.* "Perhaps, Sir, it might be done by the reſpect belonging to office, as among the Romans, where the dreſs, the *toga*, inſpired reverence.—*J.* "Why, we know very little about the Romans. But, ſurely, it is much eaſier to reſpect a man who

who has always had reſpect, than to reſpect a man who we know was laſt year no better than ourſelves, and will be no better next year. In republics there is not a reſpect for authority, but a fear of power."—*B.* "At preſent, Sir, I think riches ſeem to gain moſt reſpect."—*J.* "No, Sir, riches do not gain hearty reſpect; they only procure external attention. A very rich man, from low beginnings, may buy his election in a borough; but, *cæteris paribus*, a man of family will be preferred. People will prefer a man for whoſe father their fathers have voted, though they ſhould get no more money, or even leſs. This ſhews that the reſpect for family is not merely fanciful, but has an actual operation. If gentlemen of family would allow the rich upſtarts to ſpend their money profuſely, which they are ready enough to do, and not vie with them in expence, the upſtarts would ſoon be at an end, and the gentlemen would remain: but if the gentlemen will vie in expence with the upſtarts, which is very fooliſh, they muſt be ruined."

Johnſon, indeed, though of no high extraction himſelf, had much reſpect for birth and family, eſpecially among ladies. "Adventitious accompliſhments (ſaid he) may be poſſeſſed by all ranks; but one may eaſily diſtinguiſh the *born gentlewoman*."

One evening at Mr. (afterwards Sir Robert) Chambers's in the temple, he talked with a noble enthuſiaſm of keeping up the repreſentation of reſpectable families. His zeal on this ſubject was a circumſtance in his character exceedingly remarkable, when it is conſidered that he had no pretenſions to blood. He himſelf once ſaid, "I have great merit in being zealous for ſubordination and the honours of birth; for I can hardly tell who was my grandfather." He maintained the dignity and propriety of male ſucceſſion, in oppoſition to the opinion of one who had that day employed Mr. Chambers to draw his will, deviſing his eſtate to his three ſiſters, in preference to a remote heir male. Johnſon called them 'three *dowdies*,' and ſaid, with as high a ſpirit as the boldeſt Baron in the moſt perfect days of the feudal ſyſtem, 'An ancient eſtate ſhould always go to males. It is mighty fooliſh to let a ſtranger have it becauſe he marries your daughter, and takes your name. As for an eſtate newly-acquired by trade, you may give it, if you will, to the dog *Towſer*, and let him keep his *own* name."

"Providence (he obſerved at another time) has wiſely ordered that the more numerous men are, the more difficult it is for them to agree in any thing; and ſo they are governed. There is no doubt, that if the poor ſhould reaſon,—

'We'll

'We'll be the poor no longer, we'll make the rich take their turn,' they could eaſily do it, were it not that they can't agree. So the common ſoldiers, though ſo much more numerous than their officers, are governed by them for the ſame reaſon."

Some one told him, that Mrs. Macaulay wondered how he could reconcile his political principles with his moral; his notions of inequality and ſubordination with wiſhing well to the happineſs of all mankind, who might live ſo agreeably, had they all their portions of land, and none to domineer over another. "Why, Sir (ſaid he), I reconcile my principles very well, becauſe mankind are happier in a ſtate of inequality and ſubordination. Were they to be in this pretty ſtate of equality, they would ſoon degenerate into brutes;—they would become Monboddo's nation; their tails would grow. Sir, all would be loſers, were all to work for all:—they would have no intellectual improvement. All intellectual improvement ariſes from leiſure: all leiſure ariſes from one working for another."

On another occaſion he ſaid, "So far is it from being true that men are naturally equal, that no two people can be half an hour together, but one ſhall acquire an evident ſuperiority over the other."

"Mrs. Williams (ſaid he one day) was angry that Thrale's family did not ſend regularly to her every time they heard from me while I was in the Hebrides. Little people are apt to be jealous; but they ſhould not be jealous; for they ought to conſider, that ſuperior attention will neceſſarily be paid to ſuperior fortune or rank. Two perſons may have equal merit, and on that account may have an equal claim to attention; but one of them may have alſo fortune and rank, and ſo may have a double claim."

When Rouſſeau's treatiſe on the inequality of mankind was a faſhionable topick, it gave riſe to an obſervation of Mr. Dempſter, in a converſation with Johnſon, that the advantages of fortune and rank were nothing to a wiſe man, who ought to value only merit.—"If man (ſaid Johnſon) were a ſavage, living in the woods by himſelf, this might be true; but in civilized ſociety we all depend upon each other, and our happineſs is very much owing to the good opinion of mankind. Now, Sir, in civilized ſociety, external advantages make us more reſpected. A man with a good coat upon his back meets with a better reception than he who has a bad one. Sir, you may analyſe this, and ſay what is there in it? But that will avail you nothing; for it is part of a general ſyſtem,

Pound

Pound St. Paul's church into atoms, and conſider any ſingle atom; it is, to be ſure, good for nothing: but put all theſe atoms together, and you have St. Paul's church. So it is with human felicity, which is made up of many ingredients, each of which may be ſhewn to be very inſignificant. In civilized ſociety, perſonal merit will not ſerve you ſo much as money will. Sir, you may make the experiment. Go into the ſtreet, and give one man a lecture on morality, and another a ſhilling, and ſee which will reſpect you moſt. If you wiſh only to ſupport nature, Sir William Petty fixes your allowance at three pounds a year; but as times are much altered, let us call it ſix pounds. This ſum will fill your belly, ſhelter you from the weather, and even get you a ſtrong laſting coat, ſuppoſing it to be made of good bull's hide. Now, Sir, all beyond this is artificial, and is deſired in order to obtain a greater degree of reſpect from our fellow creatures. And, Sir, if ſix hundred pounds a year procure a man more conſequence, and, of courſe more happineſs, than ſix pounds a year, the ſame proportion will hold as to ſix thouſand, and ſo on, as far as opulence can be carried. Perhaps he who has a large fortune may not be ſo happy as he who has a ſmall one; but that muſt proceed from other cauſes than from his having the large fortune: for,

cæteris paribus, he who is rich in a civilized ſociety, muſt be happier than he who is poor; as riches, if properly uſed (and it is a man's own fault if they are not), muſt be productive of the higheſt advantages. Money, to be ſure, of itſelf is of no uſe; for its only uſe is to part with it. Rouſſeau, and all thoſe who deal in paradoxes, are led away by a childiſh deſire of novelty. When I was a boy, I uſed always to chooſe the wrong ſide of a debate, becauſe moſt ingenious things, that is to ſay, moſt new things, could be ſaid upon it. Sir, there is nothing for which you may not muſter up more plauſible arguments than thoſe which are urged againſt wealth and other external advantages. Why now, there is ſtealing; why ſhould it be thought a crime? When we conſider by what unjuſt methods property has been often acquired, and that what was unjuſtly got it muſt be unjuſt to keep, where is the harm in one man's taking the property of another from him? Beſides, Sir, when we conſider the bad uſe that many people make of their property, and how much better uſe the thief may make of it, it may be defended as a very allowable practice. Yet, Sir, the experience of mankind has diſcovered ſtealing to be ſo very bad a thing, that they make no ſcruple to hang a man for it.—When I was running about this town a very

poor

poor fellow, I was a great arguer for the advantages of poverty; but I was, at the ſame time, very ſorry to be poor. Sir, all the arguments which are brought to repreſent poverty as no evil, ſhew it to be evidently a great evil. You never find people labouring to convince you that you may live very happily on a plentiful fortune. So you hear people talking how miſerable a king muſt be; and yet they all wiſh to be in his place."

It was ſuggeſted, that kings muſt be unhappy, becauſe they are deprived of the greateſt of all ſatisfactions, eaſy and unreſerved ſociety. Johnſon ſaid, "That is an ill-founded notion. Being a king does not exclude a man from ſuch ſociety. Great kings have always been ſocial. The King of Pruſſia, the only great king at preſent, is very ſocial. Charles the Second, the laſt King of England, who was a man of parts, was ſocial; and our Henrys and Edwards were all ſocial."

Mr. Dempſter having endeavoured to maintain, that intrinſic merit ought to make the only diſtinction amongſt mankind, Johnſon obſerved, "Why, Sir, mankind have found that this cannot be. How ſhall we determine the proportion of intrinſic merit? Were that to be the only diſtinction amongſt mankind, we ſhould ſoon quarrel about the degrees of it.—

Were

Were all diſtinctions aboliſhed, the ſtrongeſt would not long acquieſce, but would endeavour to obtain a ſuperiority by their bodily ſtrength. But, Sir, as ſubordination is very neceſſary for ſociety, and contentions for ſuperiority very dangerous, mankind, that is to ſay all civilized nations, have ſettled it upon a plain invariable principle. A man is born to hereditary rank; or his being appointed to certain offices gives him a certain rank. Subordination tends greatly to human happineſs. Were we all upon an equality, we ſhould have no other enjoyment than mere animal pleaſure."

Mr. Boſwell ſaid, he conſidered diſtinction of rank to be of ſo much importance in civilized ſociety, that if he were aſked on the ſame day to dine with the firſt duke in England, and with the firſt man in Britain for genius, he ſhould heſitate which to prefer.—"To be ſure, Sir (ſaid Johnſon), if you were to dine only once, and it were never to be known where you dined, you would chooſe rather to dine with the firſt man for genius; but to gain moſt reſpect, you ſhould dine with the firſt duke in England. For nine people in ten that you meet with, would have a higher opinion of you for having dined with a duke; and the great genius himſelf would receive you better, becauſe you had been with the great duke."

He

He took care to guard himſelf againſt any poſſible ſuſpicion that his ſettled principles of reverence for rank and reſpect for wealth were at all owing to mean or intereſted motives; for he aſſerted his own independence as a literary man. "No man (ſaid he) who ever lived by literature, has lived more independently than I have done." He ſaid he had taken longer time than he needed to have done in compoſing his Dictionary.

In an eloquent argument he maintained that the ſituation of Prince of Wales was the happieſt of any perſon's in the kingdom, even beyond that of the Sovereign. Among other things he mentioned the enjoyment of hope, —the high ſuperiority of rank, without the anxious cares of government,—a great degree of power, both from natural influence wiſely uſed, and from the ſanguine expectations of thoſe who look forward to the chance of future favour.

LAW.

LAW.

WHEN Mr. Boſwell meditated trying his fortune in Weſtminſter Hall, Johnſon ſaid to him, "You muſt not indulge too ſanguine hopes, ſhould you be called to our bar. I was told, by a very ſenſible lawyer, that there are a great many chances againſt any man's ſucceſs in the profeſſion of the law; the candidates are ſo numerous, and thoſe who get large practice ſo few." He ſaid, it was by no means true that a man of good parts and application is ſure of having buſineſs, though he, indeed, allowed that if ſuch a man could but appear in a few cauſes, his merit would be known, and he would get forward; but that the great riſk was, that a man might paſs half a life-time in the Courts, and never have an opportunity of ſhewing his abilities.

"I aſked him (ſays Mr. Boſwell on another occaſion) whether as a moraliſt he did not think that the practice of the law, in ſome degree, hurt the nice feeling of honeſty."—JOHNSON. "Why no, Sir, if you act properly. You are not to deceive your clients with falſe repreſentations of your opinion: you are not to tell lies to a judge."—BOSWELL. "But what do you think

think of ſupporting a cauſe which you know to be bad?"—*J.* "Sir, you do not know it to be good or bad till the Judge determines it. I have ſaid that you are to ſtate facts fairly; ſo that your thinking, or what you call knowing, a cauſe to be bad, muſt be from reaſoning; muſt be from your ſuppoſing your arguments to be weak and inconcluſive. But, Sir, that is not enough. An argument which does not convince yourſelf, may convince the judge to whom you urge it; and if it does convince him, why, then, Sir, you are wrong, and he is right. It is his buſineſs to judge; and you are not to be confident in your own opinion that a cauſe is bad, but to ſay all you can for your client, and then hear the Judge's opinion."—*B.* "But, Sir, does not affecting a warmth when you have no warmth, and appearing to be clearly of opinion when you are in reality of another opinion, does not ſuch diſſimulation impair one's honeſty? Is there not ſome danger that a lawyer may put on the ſame maſk in common life, in the intercourſe with his friends?"—*J.* "Why no, Sir; every body knows you are paid for affecting warmth for your client, and it is therefore properly no diſſimulation; the moment you come from the bar you reſume your uſual behaviour. Sir, a man will no more carry the artifice of the bar into

into the common intercourſe of ſociety, than a man who is paid for tumbling upon his hands will continue tumbling upon his hands when he ſhould walk on his feet."

Of entails he ſaid, "They are good becauſe it is good to preſerve in a country a ſucceſſion of men to whom the people are accuſtomed to look up as to their leaders. But I am for leaving a quantity of land in commerce to excite induſtry, and keep money in the country; for if no land were to be bought in the country, there would be no encouragement to acquire wealth, becauſe a family could not be founded there; or if it were acquired, it muſt be carried away to another country where land may be bought. And although the land in every country will remain the ſame, and be as fertile where there is no money, as where there is, yet all that portion of the happineſs of civil life, which is produced by money circulating in a country, would be loſt." Mr. Boſwell aſking whether it would be for the advantage of a country that all its lands were ſold at once, Johnſon anſwered, "So far, Sir, as money produces good, it would be an advantage; for then that country would have as much money circulating in it as it is worth; but to be ſure this would be counterbalanced by the diſadvantages attending a total change of proprietors."

Mr.

Mr. Boſwell expreſſed his opinion, that the power of entailing ſhould be limited thus: "That there ſhould be one third, or perhaps one half, of the land of a country kept free for commerce; that the proportion allowed to be entailed ſhould be parcelled out ſo that no family could entail above a certain quantity. Let a family, according to the abilities of its repreſentatives, be richer or poorer in different generations, or always rich if its repreſentatives be always wiſe; but let its abſolute permanency be moderate. In this way we ſhould be certain of there being always a number of eſtabliſhed roots; and as, in the courſe of nature, there is in every age an extinction of ſome families, there would be continual openings for men ambitious of perpetuity, to plant a ſtock in the entail ground."—JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, mankind will be better able to regulate the ſyſtem of entails, when the evil of too much land being locked up by them is felt, than we can do at preſent when it is not felt."

PLAYERS.

DR. JOHNSON had thought more upon the ſubject of acting than might be generally ſuppoſed.

poſed. Talking of it one day to Mr. Kemble, he ſaid, "Are you, Sir, one of thoſe enthuſiaſts who believe yourſelf transformed into the very character you repreſent?" Upon Mr. Kemble's anſwering that he had never felt ſo ſtrong a perſuaſion himſelf; "To be ſure not, Sir (ſaid Johnſon); the thing is impoſſible. And if Garrick really believed himſelf to be that monſter Richard the Third, he deſerved to be hanged every time he performed it."

He gave the following as his opinion upon the merits of ſome of the principal performers whom he remembered to have ſeen upon the ſtage: "Mrs. Porter, in the vehemence of rage, and Mrs. Clive in the ſprightlineſs of humour, I have never ſeen equalled. What Clive did beſt, ſhe did better than Garrick; but could not do half ſo many things well; ſhe was a better romp than any I ever ſaw in nature."

Mrs. Pritchard being mentioned, he ſaid, "Her playing was quite mechanical. It is wonderful how little mind ſhe had. Sir, ſhe had never read the tragedy of Macbeth all through. She no more thought of the play out of which her part was taken, than a ſhoemaker thinks of the ſkin out of which the piece of leather, of which he is making a pair of ſhoes, is cut. Pritchard, in common life, was a vulgar idiot; ſhe would talk of her *gownd*; but, when

when ſhe appeared upon the ſtage, ſeemed to be inſpired by gentility and underſtanding." He thought Colley Cibber ignorant of the principles of his art.

"Colley Cibber (ſaid he) once conſulted me as to one of his birth-day Odes, a long time before it was wanted. I objected very freely to ſeveral paſſages. Cibber loſt patience, and would not read his Ode to an end. When we had done with criticiſm, we walked over to Richardſon's, the author of 'Clariſſa,' and I wondered to find Richardſon diſpleaſed that I 'did not treat Cibber with more *reſpect*.' Now, Sir, to talk of *reſpect* for a *player*!" (ſmiling diſdainfully).—BOSWELL. "There, Sir, you are always heretical; you never will allow merit to a player."—JOHNSON. "Merit, Sir; what merit? Do you reſpect a rope-dancer, or a ballad-ſinger?"—*B.* "No, Sir; but we reſpect a great player, as a man who can conceive lofty ſentiments, and can expreſs them gracefully."—*J.* "What, Sir, a fellow who claps a hump on his back, and a lump on his leg, and cries, '*I am Richard the Third*?' Nay, Sir, a ballad-ſinger is a higher man, for he does two things; he repeats and he ſings; there is both recitation and muſick in his performance: the player only recites."—*B.* "My dear Sir! you may turn any thing into ridicule.

I allow that a player of farce is not entitled to reſpect; he does a little thing: but he who can repreſent exalted characters, and touch the nobleſt paſſions, has very reſpectable powers; and mankind have agreed in admiring great talents for the ſtage. We muſt conſider, too, that a great player does what very few are capable of doing; his art is a very rare faculty. *Who* can repeat Hamlet's ſoliloquy, 'To be, or not to be,' as Garrick does it?"—*J.* "Any body may. Jemmy there (a boy about eight years old, who was in the room) will do it as well in a week."—*B.* "No, no, Sir; and as a proof of the merit of great acting, and of the value which mankind ſet upon it, Garrick has got a hundred thouſand pounds."—*J.* "Is getting a hundred thouſand pounds a proof of excellence? That has been done by a ſcoundrel commiſſary. Garrick was no declaimer; there was not one of his own ſcene ſhifters who could not have ſpoken 'To be, or not to be,' better than he did; yet he was the only actor I ever ſaw whom I could call a maſter both in tragedy and comedy; though I liked him beſt in comedy. A true conception of character, and natural expreſſion of it, were his diſtinguiſhing excellencies." Having expatiated with his uſual force and eloquence on Garrick's extraordinary eminence as an actor, he concluded

with this compliment to his ſocial talents: "And after all, I thought him leſs to be envied on the ſtage than at the head of a table."

MUSICK.

JOHNSON once, in a muſical party, deſired to have 'Let Ambition fire thy Mind' played over again, and appeared to give a patient attention to it; though he owned that he was very inſenſible to the power of muſick. "I told him (ſays Mr. Boſwell), that it affected me to ſuch a degree, as often to agitate my nerves painfully, producing in my mind alternate ſenſations of pathetic dejection, ſo that I was ready to ſhed tears; and of daring reſolution, ſo that I was inclined to ruſh into the thickeſt part of the battle. "Sir (ſaid he), I ſhould never hear it, if it made me ſuch a fool."

Another time, after having talked ſlightingly of muſick, he was obſerved to liſten very attentively while Miſs Thrale played on the harpſichord, and with eagerneſs he called to her, "Why don't you daſh away like Burney?" Dr. Burney upon this ſaid to him, "I believe, Sir, we ſhall make a muſician of you at laſt." Johnſon with candid complacency replied,

" Sir, I ſhall be glad to have a new ſenſe given to me."

Mr. Langton and Johnſon having gone to ſee a Freemaſon's funeral proceſſion at Rocheſter, and ſome ſolemn muſick being played on French horns, he ſaid, " This is the firſt time that I have ever been affected by muſical ſounds; adding that the impreſſion made upon him was of a melancholy kind." Mr. Langton ſaid, that this effect was a fine one.—JOHNSON. " Yes, if it ſoftens the mind ſo as to prepare it for the reception of ſalutary feelings, it may be good; but inaſmuch as it is melancholy *per ſe* it is bad."

Talking of ſounds, a gentleman in the company ſaid there was no beauty in a ſimple ſound, but only in an harmonious compoſition of ſounds. Mr. Boſwell differed from this opinion, and mentioned the ſoft and ſweet ſound of a fine woman's voice. JOHNSON. " No, Sir, if a ſerpent or a toad uttered it, you would think it ugly."—BOSWELL. " So you would think, Sir, were a beautiful tune to be uttered by one of thoſe animals."—*J.* " No, Sir, it would be admired. We have ſeen fine fidlers whom we liked as little as toads" (laughing).

LONDON.

LONDON (ſaid Johnſon) is nothing to ſome people; but to a man whoſe pleaſure is intellectual, London is the place. And there is no place where economy can be ſo well practiſed as in London. More can be had here for the money, even by ladies, than any where elſe. You cannot play tricks with your fortune in a ſmall place; you muſt make an uniform appearance. Here a lady may have well furniſhed apartments, and elegant dreſs, without any meat in her kitchen."

Mr. Boſwell once expreſſing much regret at leaving London, where he had formed many agreeable connexions, "Sir (ſaid Johnſon), I don't wonder at it; no man fond of letters leaves London without regret. But remember, Sir, you have ſeen and enjoyed a great deal; you have ſeen life in its higheſt decorations, and the world has nothing new to exhibit.—No man is ſo well qualified to leave publick life as he who has long tried it, and known it well. We are always hankering after untried ſituations, and imagining greater felicity from them than they can afford. Sir, knowledge and virtue may be acquired in all countries."

Talking of the little attachment which ſubſiſted between near relations in London, " Sir (ſaid Johnſon), in a country ſo commercial as ours, where every man can do for himſelf, there is not ſo much occaſion for that attachment. No man is thought the worſe of here, whoſe brother was hanged. In commercial countries, many of the branches of a family muſt depend on the ſtock ; ſo in order to make the head of the family take care of them, they are repreſented as connected with his reputation, that, ſelf-love being intereſted, he may exert himſelf to promote their intereſt. You have firſt large circles or clans ; as commerce increaſes, the connection is confined to families. By degrees that too goes off as having become unneceſſary, and there being few opportunities of intercourſe. One brother is a merchant in the city, and another is an officer in the guards. How little intercourſe can theſe two have !"

On the ſtate of the poor in London, Johnſon ſaid, " Saunders Welch, the Juſtice, who was once high conſtable of Holborn, and had the beſt opportunities of knowing the ſtate of the poor, told me, that I under-rated the number, when I computed that twenty a week, that is above a thouſand a year, died of hunger ; not abſolutely of immediate hunger, but of the waſting and other

other diſeaſes which are the conſequences of hunger. This happens only in ſo large a place as London, where people are not known. What we are told about the great ſums got by begging is not true; the trade is overſtocked: and you may depend upon it, there are many who cannot get work. A particular kind of manufacture fails: thoſe who have been uſed to work at it can, for ſome time, work at nothing elſe. You meet a man begging; you charge him with idleneſs: he ſays, 'I'm willing to labour. Will you give me work?'—'I cannot.'—'Why then you have no right to charge me with idleneſs."

Talking of living in the country, he ſaid, "No wiſe man will go to live in the country, unleſs he has ſomething to do which can be better done in the country. For inſtance; if he is to ſhut himſelf up for a year to ſtudy a ſcience, it is better to look out to the fields, than to an oppoſite wall. Then if a man walks out in the country there is nobody to keep him from walking in again; but if a man walks out in London, he is not ſure when he ſhall walk in again. A great city is to be ſure the ſchool for ſtudying life; and 'The proper ſtudy of mankind is man,' as Pope obſerves."—BOSWELL. "I fancy London is the beſt

place for ſociety; though I have heard that the very firſt ſociety of Paris is ſtill beyond any thing that we have here."—JOHNSON. "Sir, I queſtion if in Paris ſuch a company as is ſitting round this table could be got together in leſs than half a year. They talk in France of the felicity of men and women living together; the truth is, that there the men are not higher than the women, they know no more than the women do, and they are not held down in their converſation by the preſence of women." Mr. Ramſay ſaid, "Literature is upon the growth, it is in its ſpring in France; here it is rather *paſſée*."—*J.* "Literature was in France long before we had it. Paris was the ſecond city for the revival of letters; Italy had it firſt to be ſure. What have we done for literature, equal to what was done by the Stephani and others in France? Our literature came to us through France. Caxton printed only two books, Chaucer and Gower, that were not tranſlations from the French; and Chaucer we know took much from the Italians. No, Sir, if literature be in its ſpring in France, it is a ſecond ſpring; it is after a winter. We are now before the French in literature; but we had it long after them."

Johnſon was always much attached to London; he obſerved, that a man ſtored his mind better

better there than any where elſe; and that in remote ſituations a man's body might be feaſted, but his mind was ſtarved, and his faculties apt to degenerate, from want of exerciſe and competition. No place (he ſaid) cured a man's vanity or arrogance ſo well as London; for as no man was either great or good *per ſe*, but as compared with others not ſo good or great, he was ſure to find in the Metropolis many his equals, and ſome his ſuperiors. He obſerved, that a man in London was in leſs danger of falling in love indiſcreetly, than any where elſe; for there the difficulty of deciding between the conflicting pretenſions of a vaſt variety of objects kept him ſafe. He ſaid, that he had frequently been offered country preferment if he would conſent to take orders; but he could not leave the improved ſociety of the capital, or conſent to exchange the exhilarating joys and ſplendid decorations of public life, for the obſcurity, inſipidity, and uniformity of remote ſituations.

At another time he obſerved, "Sir, if you wiſh to have a juſt notion of the magnitude of this city, you muſt not be ſatisfied with ſeeing its great ſtreets and ſquares, but muſt ſurvey the innumerable little lanes and courts. It is not in the ſhowy evolutions of buildings, but in

in the multiplicity of human habitations which are crouded together, that the wonderful immenſity of London conſiſts *."

ŒCONOMY.

ON the ſubject of wealth, the proper uſe of it, and the effects of that art which is called œconomy, Johnſon once obſerved, "It is wonderful to think how men of very large eſtates not only ſpend their yearly income, but are often actually in want of money. It is clear, they have not value for what they ſpend. Lord Shelburne told me, that a man of high rank, who looks into his own affairs, may have all that he ought to have, all that can be of any uſe, or appear with any advantage, for five thouſand pounds a year. Therefore a great proportion muſt go

* "I have often (ſays Mr. Boſwell) amuſed myſelf with thinking how different a place London is to different people. They, whoſe narrow minds are contracted to the conſideration of ſome one particular purſuit, view it only through that medium. A politician thinks of it merely as the ſeat of government in its different departments; a grazier as a vaſt market for cattle; a mercantile man, as a place where a prodigious deal of buſineſs is done upon 'Change; a dramatic enthuſiaſt, as the grand ſcene of theatrical entertainments; a man of pleaſure, as an aſſemblage of taverns, and the great emporium for ladies of eaſy virtue. But the intellectual man is ſtruck with it, as comprehending the whole of human life in all its variety, the contemplation of which is inexhauſtible."

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in waſte; and indeed this is the caſe with moſt people, whatever their fortune is."—BOSWELL. "I have no doubt, Sir, of this; but how is it? What is waſte?"—JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, breaking bottles and a thouſand other things. Waſte cannot be accurately told, though we are ſenſible how deſtructive it is. Œconomy on the one hand, by which a certain income is made to maintain a man genteelly, and waſte on the other, by which, on the ſame income, another man lives ſhabbily, cannot be defined. It is a very nice thing; as one man wears his coat out much ſooner than another, we cannot tell how."

On the right employment of wealth he remarked thus: "A man cannot make a bad uſe of his money ſo far as regards Society, if he does not hoard it; for if he either ſpends it, or lends it out, Society has the benefit. It is in general better to ſpend money than to give it away; for induſtry is more promoted by ſpending money than by giving it away. A man who ſpends his money is ſure he is doing good with it; he is not ſo ſure when he gives it away. A man who ſpends ten thouſand a year will do more good than a man who ſpends two thouſand, and gives away eight."

His Ofellus, in the 'Art of living in London,' he has been heard to relate, was an Iriſh painter,

painter, whom he knew at Birmingham, and who had practiſed his own precepts of œconomy for ſeveral years in the Britiſh capital. He aſſured Johnſon, who perhaps was then meditating to try his fortune in London, but was apprehenſive of the expence, "that thirty pounds a year was enough to enable a man to live there without being contemptible. He allowed ten pounds for clothes and linen. He ſaid a man might live in a garret at eighteen pence a week; few people would enquire where he lodged; and if they did, it was eaſy to ſay, 'Sir, I am to be found at ſuch a place.' By ſpending threepence in a coffee-houſe, he might be for ſome hours every day in very good company; he might dine for ſixpence, breakfaſt on bread and milk for a penny, and do without ſupper. On *clean ſhirt-day* he went abroad, and paid viſits." Johnſon would often talk of this frugal friend, whom he recollected with eſteem and kindneſs, and did not like to have any one ſmile at the recital. "This man (ſaid he gravely) was a very ſenſible man, who perfectly underſtood common affairs; a man of a great deal of knowledge of the world, freſh from life, not ſtrained through books. He borrowed a horſe and ten pounds at Birmingham. Finding himſelf maſter of ſo much money, he ſet off for Weſt Cheſter, in order

to

to get to Ireland. He returned the horſe, and probably the ten pounds too, after he got home."

To Mr. Boſwell Johnſon once ſaid, "Get as much force of mind as you can. Live within your income. Always have ſomething ſaved at the end of the year. Let your imports be more than your exports, and you'll never go far wrong."

A gentleman praiſed the accuracy of an account book of a lady whom he mentioned. Johnſon ſaid, "Keeping accounts, Sir, is of no uſe when a man is ſpending his own money, and has nobody to whom he is to account. You won't eat leſs beef to-day, becauſe you have written down what it coſt yeſterday." Another lady was mentioned who thought as he did, ſo that her huſband could not get her to keep an account of the expences of the family, as ſhe thought it enough that ſhe never exceeded the ſum allowed her. JOHNSON. "Sir, it is fit ſhe ſhould keep an account, becauſe her huſband wiſhes it; but I do not ſee its uſe."—Mr. Boſwell maintained, that keeping an account had this advantage, that it ſatisfied a man that his money had not been loſt or ſtolen, which he might ſometimes be apt to imagine, were there no written ſtate of his expences; and beſides that, a calculation of œconomy,

nomy, ſo as not to exceed one's income, could not be made without a view of the different articles in figures, that one might ſee how to retrench in ſome particulars leſs neceſſary than others. This Johnſon did not attempt to anſwer.

At another time ſpeaking of œconomy he remarked, that it was hardly worth while to ſave anxiouſly twenty pounds a year. If a man could ſave to ſuch a degree as to enable him to aſſume a different rank in ſociety, then, indeed, it might anſwer ſome purpoſe.

"I told him (ſays Mr. Boſwell) that at a gentleman's houſe where there was thought to be ſuch extravagance or bad management that he was living much beyond his income, his lady had objected to the cutting of a pickled mango, and that I had taken an opportunity to aſk the price of it, and found it was only two ſhillings; ſo here was a very poor ſaving." "Sir (ſaid Johnſon), that is the blundering œconomy of a narrow underſtanding. It is ſtopping one hole in a ſieve."

Talking of a penurious gentleman of his acquaintance, Johnſon ſaid, "He is narrow, not ſo much from avarice, as from impotence to ſpend his money. He cannot find in his heart to pour out a bottle of wine; but he would not much care if it ſhould ſour."

His

His friend Edward Cave * having been on ſome occaſion mentioned, he ſaid, "Cave uſed to ſell ten thouſand of 'The Gentleman's Magazine;' yet ſuch was then his minute attention and anxiety that the ſale ſhould not ſuffer the ſmalleſt decreaſe, that he would name a particular perſon who he heard had talked of leaving off the Magazine, and would ſay, 'Let us have ſomething good next month."

It was obſerved, that avarice was inherent in ſome diſpoſitions. "No man (ſaid Johnſon) was born a miſer, becauſe no man was born to poſſeſſion. Every man is born *cupidus*—deſirous of getting; but not *avarus*—deſirous of keeping."—Boswell. "I have heard old Mr. Sheridan maintain, with much ingenuity, that a complete miſer is a happy man; a miſer who gives himſelf wholly to the one paſſion of ſaving."—Johnson. "That is flying in the face of all the world, who have called an avaricious man *a miſer*, becauſe he is miſerable. No, Sir; a man who ſpends and ſaves money is the happieſt man, becauſe he has both enjoyments."

* The original proprietor of The Gentleman's Magazine, in which Johnſon was employed as a writer.

The following account of the admirable ſyſtem of domeſtic Œconomy adopted by MR. PEREGRINE LANGTON, *was communicated by his Nephew* MR. BENNET LANGTON *to* MR. BOSWELL.

"The circumſtances of *Mr. Peregrine Langton* were theſe: He had an annuity for life of two hundred pounds per annum. He reſided in a village in Lincolnſhire; the rent of his houſe, with two or three ſmall fields, was twenty eight pounds; the county he lived in was not more than moderately cheap; his family conſiſted of a ſiſter, who paid him eighteen pounds annually for her board, and a niece. The ſervants were two maids, and two men in livery. His common way of living, at his own table, was three or four diſhes; the appurtenances to his table were neat and handſome; he frequently entertained company at dinner, and then his table was well ſerved with as many diſhes as were uſual at the tables of the other gentlemen in the neighbourhood. His own appearance, as to clothes, was genteelly neat and plain. He had always a poſt-chaiſe, and kept three horſes.

"Such, with the reſources I have mentioned, was his way of living, which he did not ſuffer to employ his whole income; for he had always a ſum of money lying by him for any extraordinary expences that might ariſe. Some money he put into the ſtocks; at his death, the ſum he had there amounted to one hundred and fifty pounds. He purchaſed out of his income his houſehold furniture and linen, of which latter he had a very ample ſtore; and as I am aſſured by thoſe who had very good means of knowing, not leſs than the tenth part of his income was ſet apart for charity: at the time of his death, the ſum of twenty-five pounds was found, with a direction to be employed in ſuch uſes.

"He had laid down a plan of living proportioned to his income, and did not practiſe any extraordinary degree of parſimony, but endeavoured that in his family there ſhould be

be plenty without waſte; as an inſtance that this was his endeavour, it may be worth while to mention a method he took in regulating a proper allowance of malt liquor to be drunk in his family, that there might not be a deficiency, nor any intemperate profuſion: On a complaint made, that his allowance of a hogſhead in a month was not enough for his own family, he ordered the quantity of a hogſhead to be put into bottles, had it locked up from the ſervants, and diſtributed out, every day, eight quarts, which is the quantity each day at one hogſhead in a month; and told his ſervants, that if that did not ſuffice, he would allow them more: but, by this method, it appeared at once that the allowance was much more than ſufficient for his ſmall family; and this proved a clear conviction, that could not be anſwered, and ſaved all future diſpute. He was in general very diligently and punctually attended and obeyed by his ſervants; he was very conſiderate as to the injunctions he gave, and explained them diſtinctly; and, at their firſt coming to his ſervice, ſteadily exacted a cloſe compliance with them, without any remiſſion; and the ſervants, finding this to be the caſe, ſoon grew habitually accuſtomed to the practice of their buſineſs, and then very little further attention was neceſſary. On extraordinary inſtances of good behaviour or diligence, he was not wanting in particular encouragements and preſents above their wages; it is remarkable that he would permit their relations to viſit them, and ſtay at his houſe two or three days at a time.

"The wonder, with moſt that hear an account of his œconomy, will be how he was able, with ſuch an income, to do ſo much, eſpecially when it is conſidered that he paid for every thing he had. He had no land, except the two or three ſmall fields which I have ſaid he rented; and inſtead of gaining any thing by their produce, I have reaſon to think he loſt by them; however, they furniſhed him with no further aſſiſtance towards his houſekeeping, than graſs for his horſes (not hay, for that I know he bought), and for two

cows. Every Monday morning he ſettled his family accounts, and ſo kept up a conſtant attention to the confining his expences within his income ; and to do it more exactly, compared thoſe expences with a computation he had made, how much that income would afford him every week and day of the year. One of his œconomical practices was, as ſoon as any repair was wanting in or about his houſe, to have it immediately performed. When he had money to ſpare, he choſe to lay in a proviſion of linen or clothes, or any other neceſſaries; as then, he ſaid, he could afford it, which he might not be ſo well able to do when the actual want came ; in conſequence of which method, he had a conſiderable ſupply of neceſſary articles lying by him, beſide what was in uſe.

" But the main particular that ſeems to have enabled him to do ſo much with his income was, that he paid for every thing as ſoon as he had it, except, alone, what were current accounts, ſuch as rent for his houſe and ſervants' wages ; and theſe he paid at the ſtated times with the utmoſt exactneſs. He gave notice to the tradeſmen of the neighbouring market-towns, that they ſhould no longer have his cuſtom, if they let any of his ſervants have any thing without their paying for it. Thus he put it out of his power to commit thoſe imprudences to which thoſe are liable that defer their payments by uſing their money ſome other way than where it ought to go. And whatever money he had by him, he knew that it was not demanded elſewhere, but that he might ſafely employ it as he pleaſed.

" His example was confined, by the ſequeſtered place of his abode, to the obſervation of few, though his prudence and virtue would have made it valuable to all who could have known it. Theſe few particulars, which I knew myſelf, or have obtained from thoſe who lived with him, may afford inſtruction, and may be an incentive to that wiſe art of living, which he ſo ſucceſsfully practiſed."

TRADE.

TRADE.

TALKING of trade, Johnſon obſerved, "It is a miſtaken notion that a vaſt deal of money is brought into a nation by trade. It is not ſo. Commodities come from commodities; but trade produces no capital acceſſion of wealth. However, though there ſhould be little profit in money, there is a conſiderable profit in pleaſure, as it gives to one nation the productions of another; as we have wines and fruits, and many other foreign articles, brought to us."—BOSWELL. "Yes, Sir, and there is a profit in pleaſure, by its furniſhing occupation to ſuch numbers of mankind."—JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, you cannot call that pleaſure to which all are averſe, and which none begin but with the hope of leaving off; a thing which men diſlike before they have tried it, and when they have tried it."—*B.* "But, Sir, the mind muſt be employed, and we grow weary when idle."—*J.* "That is, Sir, becauſe others being buſy, we want company; but if we were all idle, there would be no growing weary; we ſhould all entertain one another. There is, indeed, this in trade: it gives men an opportunity of improving their ſituation. If

there were no trade, many who are poor would always remain poor; but no man loves labour for itſelf."—*B.* "Yes, Sir, I know a perſon who does. He is a very laborious Judge, and he loves the labour."—*J.* "Sir, that is becauſe he loves reſpect and diſtinction. Could he have them without labour, he would like it leſs."—*B.* "He tells me he likes it for itſelf."—*J.* "Why, Sir, he fancies ſo, becauſe he is not accuſtomed to abſtract."

The company got into an argument whether the Judges who went to India might with propriety engage in trade. Johnſon warmly maintained that they might. "For why (he urged) ſhould not Judges get riches, as well as thoſe who deſerve them leſs?" Mr. Boſwell ſaid, they ſhould have ſufficient ſalaries, and have nothing to take off their attention from the affairs of the public. JOHNSON. "No Judge, Sir, can give his whole attention to his office; and it is very proper that he ſhould employ what time he has to himſelf, to his own advantage, in the moſt profitable manner."—"Then, Sir (ſaid Mr. Davies, who enlivened the diſpute by making it ſomewhat dramatic), he may become an inſurer; and when he is going to the bench he may be ſtopped—'Your Lordſhip cannot go yet; here is a bunch of invoices; ſeveral ſhips are about to ſail."—*J.* "Sir,

J. "Sir, you may as well ſay a Judge ſhould not have a houſe; for they may come and tell him, 'Your Lordſhip's houſe is on fire;' and ſo, inſtead of minding the buſineſs of his court, he is to be occupied in getting the engine with the greateſt ſpeed. There is no end of this. Every Judge, who has land, trades to a certain extent in corn or in cattle; and in the land itſelf undoubtedly. His ſteward acts for him, and ſo do clerks for a great merchant. A Judge may be a farmer; but he is not to caſtrate his own pigs. A Judge may play a little at cards for his amuſement; but he is not to play at marbles, or at chuck-farthing in the Piazza. No, Sir; there is no profeſſion to which a man gives a very great proportion of his time. It is wonderful when a calculation is made, how little the mind is actually employed in the diſcharge of any profeſſion. No man would be a Judge, upon the condition of being totally a Judge. The beſt employed lawyer has his mind at work but for a ſmall proportion of his time: a great deal of his occupation is merely mechanical.—I once wrote for a Magazine: I made a calculation, that if I ſhould write but a page a day, at the ſame rate, I ſhould in ten years write nine volumes in folio of an ordinary ſize and print."—Boswell. "Such as Carte's Hiſtory?"—*J.* "Yes, Sir. When a man

writes from his own mind, he writes very rapidly. The greateſt part of a writer's time is ſpent in reading, in order to write; a man will turn over half a library to make one book."

Mr. Boſwell argued warmly againſt the Judges trading, and mentioned Hale as an inſtance of a perfect Judge, who devoted himſelf entirely to his office.—*J.* "Hale, Sir, attended to other things beſide law: he left a great eſtate."—*B.* "That was, becauſe what he got accumulated without any exertion and anxiety on his part."

Johnſon at another time obſerved, that abilities might be employed in a narrow ſphere, as in getting money, which he ſaid he believed no man could do without vigorous parts, though concentrated to a point. RAMSAY. "Yes, like a ſtrong horſe in a mill; he pulls better."

Mr. Strahan talked of launching into the great ocean of London in order to have a chance for riſing into eminence; and, obſerving that many men were kept back from trying their fortunes there, becauſe they were born to a competency, ſaid, "Small certainties are the bane of men of talents;" which Johnſon confirmed. Mr. Strahan put Johnſon in mind of a remark which he had made to him; "There are few ways in which a man can be more

more innocently employed, than in getting money." "The more one thinks of this (ſaid Strahan) the juſter it will appear."

Talking of expence, Johnſon obſerved with what munificence a great merchant will ſpend his money, both from his having it at command, and from his enlarged views by calculation of a good effect upon the whole. "Whereas (ſaid he) you will hardly ever find a country gentleman who is not a good deal diſconcerted at an unexpected occaſion for his being obliged to lay out ten pounds."

Of an acquaintance whoſe manners and every thing about him, though expenſive, were coarſe, he ſaid, "Sir, you ſee in him vulgar proſperity."

Upon a viſit to Mr. Boſwell at a country lodging near Twickenham, he aſked what ſort of ſociety he had there. Mr. B. told him but indifferent; as they chiefly conſiſted of opulent traders, retired from buſineſs. Johnſon ſaid, he never much liked that claſs of people; "For (ſaid he) they have loſt the civility of tradeſmen, without acquiring the manners of gentlemen."

Being once ſolicited to compoſe a funeral ſermon for the daughter of a tradeſman, he naturally enquired into the character of the deceaſed;

ceaſed; and being told ſhe was remarkable for her humility and condeſcenſion to inferiors, he obſerved, that thoſe were very laudable qualities, but it might not be ſo eaſy to diſcover who the lady's inferiors were.

He made the common remark on the unhappineſs which men who have led a buſy life experience when they retire in expectation of enjoying themſelves at eaſe, and that they generally languiſh for want of their habitual occupation, and wiſh to return to it. He mentioned as ſtrong an inſtance of this as can well be imagined. "An eminent tallow-chandler in London, who had acquired a conſiderable fortune, gave up the trade in favour of his foreman, and went to live at a country-houſe near town. He ſoon grew weary, and paid frequent viſits to his old ſhop, where he deſired they might let him know their *melting-days*, and he would come and aſſiſt them; which he accordingly did. Here, Sir, was a man, to whom the moſt diſguſting circumſtance in the buſineſs to which he had been uſed, was a relief from idleneſs *."

* The COMPILER has been informed of a living inſtance of the truth of this remark of Dr. Johnſon's.

A tavern keeper in the neighbourhood of Holborn having ſaved money enough to retire from buſineſs, parted with his leaſe and ſtock to his principal ſervant. Things went on well with the new proprietor, and for a ſhort time the retired citizen

TRAVELLING.

JOHNSON once talked with uncommon animation of travelling into diſtant countries; that the mind was enlarged by it, and that an acquiſition of dignity of character was derived from it. He expreſſed a particular enthuſiaſm with reſpect to viſiting the wall of China. Mr. Boſwell caught it for the moment, and ſaid he really believed he ſhould go and ſee the wall of China, had he not children, of whom it was his duty to take care.—"Sir (ſaid Johnſon), by doing ſo, you would do what will be of importance in raiſing your children to eminence. There would be a luſtre reflected upon them from your ſpirit and curioſity. They would be at all times regarded as the children of a man who had gone to view the wall of China. I am ſerious, Sir."

citizen endured the charge; but *ennui* at length attacked him, and drove him to make very liberal offers to his ſucceſſor to reſtore the concern. Theſe, however, were refuſed; he then ſolicited to be admitted to a partnerſhip; but this was not complied with. At length, ſo ſtrong was the force of habit, he begged to be allowed to act as a waiter; in which occupation, it is ſaid, he continues at the preſent day, in the very houſe where he acquired a fortune as maſter.

A journey

A journey to Italy was once in his thoughts. He ſaid, "A man who has not been in Italy is always conſcious of an inferiority, from his not having ſeen what it is expected a man ſhould ſee. The grand object of travelling is to ſee the ſhores of the Mediterranean. On thoſe ſhores were the four great Empires of the world; the Aſſyrian, the Perſian, the Grecian, and the Roman. All our religion, almoſt all our law, almoſt all our arts, almoſt all that ſets us above ſavages, has come to us from the ſhores of the Mediterranean." It was obſerved, that 'THE MEDITERRANEAN would be a noble ſubject for a poem.'

He upon all occaſions ſhewed an averſion to go to Ireland, where Mr. B. propoſed to him that they ſhould make a tour. —JOHNSON. "It is the laſt place where I ſhould wiſh to travel." —BOSWELL. "Should you not like to ſee Dublin, Sir?"—*J.* No, Sir; Dublin is only a worſe capital."—*B.* "Is not the Giant's Cauſeway worth ſeeing?"—*J.* "Worth ſeeing, yes; but not worth going to ſee."

Yet he had a kindneſs for the Iriſh nation, and thus generouſly expreſſed himſelf to a gentleman from that country, on the ſubject of an UNION, which artful politicians often had in view;—"Do not make an union with us, Sir. We

We ſhould unite with you only to rob you.—We ſhould have robbed the Scotch, if they had had any thing of which we could have robbed them."

It was his opinion that the information we have from modern travellers is much more authentic than what we had from ancient travellers.—"Ancient travellers (ſaid he) gueſſed; modern travellers meaſure. The Swiſs admit that there is but one error in Stanyan. If Brydone were more attentive to his Bible, he would be a good traveller."

Mr. Boſwell once aſked him if modeſty was not natural.—JOHNSON. "I cannot ſay, Sir, as we find no people quite in a ſtate of nature;—but I think the more they are taught, the more modeſt they are. The French are a groſs, ill-bred, untaught people; a lady there will ſpit on the floor and rub it with her foot. What I gained by being in France was, learning to be better ſatisfied with my own country. Time may be employed to more advantage from nineteen to twenty-four almoſt in any way than in travelling; when you ſet travelling againſt mere negation, againſt doing nothing, it is better to be ſure; but how much more would a young man improve were he to ſtudy during thoſe years.—Indeed, if a young man is wild, and muſt run after

after women and bad company, it is better this ſhould be done abroad, as, on his return, he can break off ſuch connections, and begin at home a new man, with a character to form, and acquaintances to make. How little does travelling ſupply to the converſation of any man who has travelled; how little to Beauclerk;—*B.* "What ſay you to Lord ——— ?"—*J.* "I never but once heard him talk of what he had ſeen, and that was of a large ſerpent in one of the pyramids of Egypt."—*B.* "Well, I happened to hear him tell the ſame thing, which made me mention him."

Of a young female touriſt, he ſaid, "Miſs Nancy has doubtleſs kept a conſtant and copious journal. Let her review her journal often, and ſet down what ſhe knows herſelf to have omitted, that ſhe may truſt to memory as little as poſſible, for memory is ſoon confuſed by a quick ſucceſſion of things; and ſhe will grow every day leſs conſcious of the truth of her own narratives unleſs ſhe can recur to ſome written memorials. If ſhe has ſatisfied herſelf with hints, inſtead of full repreſentations, let her ſupply the deficiencies now, while her memory is yet freſh, and while her father's memory may help her. If ſhe obſerves this direction, ſhe will not have travelled in vain; for ſhe will bring home

home a book with which ſhe may entertain herſelf to the end of life. If it were not now too late, I would adviſe her to note the impreſſion which the firſt ſight of any thing new and wonderful made upon her mind. Let her now ſet her thoughts down as ſhe can recollect them; for faint as they may already be, they will grow every day fainter."

One day dining at an excellent inn, he expatiated on the felicity of England in its taverns and inns, and triumphed over the French for not having, in any perfection, the tavern life.— "There is no private houſe (ſaid he) in which people can enjoy themſelves ſo well, as at a capital tavern. Let there be ever ſo great plenty of good things, ever ſo much grandeur, ever ſo much elegance, ever ſo much deſire that every body ſhould be eaſy; in the nature of things it cannot be: there muſt always be ſome degree of care and anxiety. The maſter of the houſe is anxious to entertain his gueſts; the gueſts are anxious to be agreeable to him: and no man, but a very impudent dog indeed, can as freely command what is in another man's houſe, as if it were his own. Whereas, at a tavern, there is a general freedom from anxiety. You are ſure you are welcome; and the more noiſe you make, the more trouble you give, the more good

good things you call for, the welcomer you are. No ſervants will attend you with the alacrity which waiters do, who are incited by the proſpect of an immediate reward in proportion as they pleaſe. No, Sir; there is nothing which has yet been contrived by man, by which ſo much happineſs is produced as by a good tavern or inn *. He then repeated, with great emotion, Shenſtone's lines:

"Whoe'er has travell'd life's dull round,
"Where'er his ſtages may have been,
"May ſigh to think he ſtill has found
"The warmeſt welcome at an inn."

* Sir John Hawkins (ſays Mr. B.) has preſerved very few *Memorabilia* of Johnſon. There is, however, to be found, in his bulky tome, a very excellent one upon this ſubject. "In contradiction to thoſe who, having a wife and children, prefer domeſtic enjoyment to thoſe which a tavern affords, I have heard him aſſert, *that a tavern chair was the throne of human felicity.*—'As ſoon (ſaid he) as I enter the door of a tavern, I experience an oblivion of care, and a freedom from ſolicitude; when I am ſeated, I find the maſter courteous, and the ſervants obſequious to my call; anxious to know and ready to ſupply my wants: wine there exhilarates my ſpirits, and prompts me to free converſation and an interchange of diſcourſe with thoſe whom I moſt love: I dogmatiſe and am contradicted, and in this conflict of opinions and ſentiments I find delight.

POLITICS.

POLITICS.

JOHNSON arraigned the modern politics of this country, as entirely devoid of all principle of whatever kind.—"Politics (ſaid he) are now nothing more than means of riſing in the world. With this ſole view do men engage in politics, and their whole conduct proceeds upon it. How different in that reſpect is the ſtate of the nation now from what it was in the time of Charles the Firſt, during the Uſurpation, and after the Reſtoration, in the time of Charles the Second. Hudibras affords a ſtrong proof how much hold political principles had then upon the minds of men. There is in Hudibras a great deal of bullion which will always laſt. But to be ſure the brighteſt ſtrokes of his wit owed their force to the impreſſion of the characters which was upon men's minds at the time; to their knowing them, at table and in the ſtreet: in ſhort being familiar with them: and above all, to his ſatire being directed againſt thoſe whom a little while before they had hated and feared. The nation in general has ever been loyal, has been at all times attached to the monarch, though a few daring rebels have been wonderfully powerful for a time.

The murder of Charles the Firſt was undoubtedly not committed with the approbation or conſent of the people. Had that been the caſe, Parliament would not have ventured to conſign the regicides to their deſerved puniſhment. And we know what exuberance of joy there was when Charles the Second was reſtored. If Charles the Second had bent all his mind to it, had made it his ſole object, he might have been as abſolute as Louis the Fourteenth." A gentleman obſerved he would have done no harm if he had.—JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, abſolute princes ſeldom do any harm. But they who are governed by them are governed by chance. There is no ſecurity for good government." Mr. Cambridge ſaid, "There have been many ſad victims to abſolute government."—*J.* "So, Sir, have there been to popular factions."—*B.* "The queſtion is, which is worſt, one wild beaſt or many?"

Talking of different governments, Johnſon ſaid, "The more contracted a power is, the more eaſily it is deſtroyed. A country governed by a deſpot is an inverted cone. Government there cannot be ſo firm as when it reſts upon a broad baſis gradually contracted, as the government of Great-Britain, which is founded on the parliament, then is in the privy-council, then in the king."—BOSWELL. "Power when

when contracted into the perſon of a deſpot may be eaſily deſtroyed, as the prince may be cut off. So Caligula wiſhed that the people of Rome had but one neck, that he might cut them off at a blow." — GENERAL OGLETHORPE. "It was of the Senate he wiſhed that. The Senate by its uſurpation controuled both the Emperor and the people."

At another time Johnſon ſaid, "The mode of government by one may be ill adapted to a ſmall ſociety, but is beſt for a great nation.— The characteriſtic of our own government at preſent is imbecillity. The magiſtrate dare not call the guards for fear of being hanged.— The guards will not come, for fear of being given up to the blind rage of popular juries *."

Patriotiſm having become one of the topics, Johnſon ſuddenly uttered, in a ſtrong determined tone, an apophthegm, at which many will ſtart :—"Patriotiſm is the laſt refuge of a ſcoundrel." But let it be conſidered, that he did not mean a real and generous love of our country, but that pretended patriotiſm which ſo many, in all ages and countries, have made a cloak for ſelf-intereſt.—"I maintained (ſays Mr. B.) that certainly all patriots were not

* This was a juſt obſervation before the riots in 1780. Since that time the advantage of a vigorous government has been univerſally acknowledged.

ſcoundrels. Being urged (not by Johnſon) to name one exception, I mentioned an eminent perſon, whom we all greatly admired.—JOHNSON. "Sir, I do not ſay that he is *not* honeſt; but we have no reaſon to conclude, from his political conduct, that he *is* honeſt. Were he to accept of a place from this miniſtry, he would loſe that character of firmneſs which he has, and might be turned out of his place in a year. This miniſtry is neither ſtable nor grateful to their friends, as Sir Robert Walpole was; ſo that he may think it more for his intereſt to take the chance of his party coming in."

He ſaid, "Lord Chatham was a Dictator; he poſſeſſed the power of putting the State in motion; now there is no power, all order is relaxed."—BOSWELL. "Is there no hope of a change to the better."—JOHNSON. "Why, yes Sir, when we are weary of this relaxation. So the city of London will appoint its mayors again by ſeniority*."—*B.* "But is not that taking a mere chance for having a good or a bad mayor?"—*J.* "Yes, Sir; but the evil of competition is greater than that of the worſt mayor that can come: beſides, there is no more reaſon to ſuppoſe that the choice of a rabble will be right, than that chance will be right."

* City diſſenſions ran high at the time; and ſome Aldermen were put aſide to elect others to the chair.

Of a perſon who differed from him in politics, he ſaid, "In private life he is a very honeſt gentleman; but I will not allow him to be ſo in public life. People *may* be honeſt, though they are doing wrong: that is between their Maker and them. But *we*, who are ſuffering by their pernicious conduct, are to deſtroy them. We are ſure that ******** acts from intereſt. We know what his genuine principles were.—They who allow their paſſions to confound the diſtinctions between right and wrong are criminal. They may be convinced; but they have not come honeſtly by their conviction."

Talking of the accuſation againſt a gentleman for ſuppoſed delinquencies in India, Johnſon ſaid, "What foundation there is for accuſation I know not; but they will not get at him. Where bad actions are committed at ſo great a diſtance, a delinquent can obſcure the evidence till the ſcent becomes cold; there is a cloud between, which cannot be penetrated;—therefore all diſtant power is bad. I am clear that the beſt plan for the government of India is a deſpotic governor; for if he be a good man, it is evidently the beſt government; and ſuppoſing him to be a bad man, it is better to have one plunderer than many. A governor whoſe power is checked lets others plunder, that he himſelf may be allowed to plunder; but if

deſpotic, he ſees that the more he lets others plunder, the leſs there will be for himſelf, ſo he reſtrains them; and though he himſelf plunders, the country is a gainer, compared with being plundered by numbers."

Of the diſtinctions of Tory and Whig, he ſaid, "A wiſe Tory and a wiſe Whig, I believe, will agree. Their principles are the ſame, though their modes of thinking are different. A high Tory makes Government unintelligible; it is loſt in the clouds. A violent Whig makes it impracticable; he is for allowing ſo much liberty to every man, that there is not power enough to govern any man. The prejudice of the Tory is for eſtabliſhment; the prejudice of the Whig is for innovation. A Tory does not wiſh to give more real power to Government, but that Government ſhould have more reverence. Then they differ as to the Church. The Tory is not for giving more legal power to the Clergy, but wiſhes they ſhould have a conſiderable influence, founded on the opinion of mankind; the Whig is for limiting and watching them with a narrow jealouſy."

At a time when fears of an invaſion were circulated, Mr. Spottiſwoode obſerved, that Mr. Fraſer the engineer, who had lately come from Dunkirk, ſaid, that the French had the ſame fears of us. "It is thus (ſaid Johnſon) that mutual

mutual cowardice keeps us in peace. Were one half of mankind brave, and one half cowards, the brave would be always beating the cowards. Were all brave, they would lead a very uneasy life; all would be continually fighting: but being all cowards, we go on very well."

Lord Graham commended Dr. Drummond at Naples, as a man of extraordinary talents;—and added, that he had a great love of liberty.—JOHNSON. "He is *young*, my Lord (looking to his Lordship with an arch smile); all *boys* love liberty, till experience convinces them that they are not so fit to govern themselves as they imagined. We are all agreed as to our own liberty; we would have as much of it as we can get; but we are not agreed as to the liberty of others; for in proportion as we take, others must lose. I believe we hardly wish that the mob should have liberty to govern us. When that was the case some time ago, no man was at liberty not to have candles in his windows."—RAMSAY. "The result is, that order is better than confusion."—*J.* "The result is, that order cannot be had but by subordination."

On another occasion, petitions being mentioned, he said, "This petitioning is a new mode of distressing government, and a mighty easy one. I will undertake to get petitions either

againſt quarter guineas or half guineas, with the help of a little hot wine. There muſt be no yielding to encourage this. The object is not important enough. We are not to blow up half a dozen palaces, becauſe one cottage is burning."

He had great compaſſion for the miſeries and diſtreſſes of the Iriſh nation, particularly the Papiſts; and ſeverely reprobated the debilitating policy of the Britiſh government, which, he ſaid, was the moſt deteſtable mode of perſecution. To a gentleman, who hinted that ſuch policy might be neceſſary to ſupport the authority of the Engliſh government, he replied by ſaying, "Let the authority of the Engliſh government periſh, rather than be maintained by iniquity. Better would it be to reſtrain the turbulence of the natives by the authority of the ſword, and to make them amenable to law and juſtice by an effectual and vigorous police, than to grind them to powder by all manner of diſabilities and incapacities. Better (ſaid he) to hang or drown people at once, than by an unrelenting perſecution to beggar and ſtarve them."

"The notion of liberty, he obſerved, amuſes the people of England, and helps to keep off the *tædium vitæ*. When a butcher tells you that his heart bleeds for his country, he has, in fact, no uneaſy feeling."

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He ſaid, he was glad Lord George Gordon had eſcaped, rather than that a precedent ſhould be eſtabliſhed for hanging a man for *conſtructive treaſon*; which he conſidered would be a dangerous engine of arbitrary power.

He would not admit the importance of the queſtion concerning the legality of general warrants. "Such a power (he obſerved) muſt be veſted in every government, to anſwer particular caſes of neceſſity; and there can be no juſt complaint but when it is abuſed, for which thoſe who adminiſter government muſt be anſwerable. It is a matter of ſuch indifference, a matter about which the people care ſo very little, that were a man to be ſent over Britain, to offer them an exception from it for an halfpenny a piece, very few would purchaſe it." This perhaps was a ſpecimen of that laxity of talking which he has often been heard fairly to acknowledge.

He ſaid, "The duration of Parliament, whether for ſeven years or the life of the King, appears to me ſo immaterial, that I would not give half a crown to turn the ſcale one way or the other. The *habeas corpus* is the ſingle advantage which our government has over that of other countries."

Speaking of the national debt, he ſaid, it was an idle dream to ſuppoſe that the country

could ſink under it. "Let the public creditors be ever ſo clamorous, the intereſt of millions muſt ever prevail over that of thouſands."

To Mr. Boſwell (who had thoughts of getting into Parliament) he ſaid, "You are entering upon a tranſaction which requires much prudence. You muſt endeavour to oppoſe without exaſperating; to practiſe temporary hoſtility, without producing enemies for life.—This is, perhaps, hard to be done; yet it has been done by many, and ſeems moſt likely to be effected by oppoſing merely upon general principles, without deſcending to perſonal or particular cenſures or objections. One thing I muſt enjoin you, which is ſeldom obſerved in the conduct of elections. I muſt entreat you to be ſcrupulous in the uſe of ſtrong liquors.—One night's drunkenneſs may defeat the labours of forty days well employed. Be firm, but not clamorous; be active, but not malicious; and you may form ſuch an intereſt, as may not only exalt yourſelf, but dignify your family."

Lord Newhaven and Johnſon carried on an argument for ſome time, concerning the Middleſex election. Johnſon ſaid, "Parliament may be conſidered as bound by law, as a man is bound where there is nobody to tie the knot.

As it is clear that the Houſe of Commons may expel, and expel again and again, why not allow of the power to incapacitate for that parliament, rather than have a perpetual conteſt kept up between Parliament and the People."—Lord Newhaven took the oppoſite ſide, but reſpectfully ſaid, "I ſpeak with great deference to you, Dr. Johnſon, I ſpeak to be inſtructed." This had its full effect on the Doctor. He bowed his head almoſt as low as the table to a complimenting nobleman; and called out, "My Lord, my Lord, I do not deſire all this ceremony; let us tell our minds to one another quietly." After the debate was over, he ſaid, "I have got lights on the ſubject to-day which I had not before." This was a great deal from him, eſpecially as he had written a pamphlet upon it.

He obſerved, "The Houſe of Commons was originally not a privilege of the people, but a check for the crown on the Houſe of Lords. I remember Henry the Eighth wanted them to do ſomething: they heſitated in the morning, but did it in the afternoon. He told them, 'It is well you did; or half your heads ſhould have been upon Temple Bar.' But the Houſe of Commons is now no longer under the power of the crown, and therefore muſt be bribed."—He added, "I have no delight in talking of public affairs." Mr.

Mr. B. was once engaged as Counſel at the Bar of the Houſe of Commons to oppoſe a road-bill in the county of Stirling, and aſked Johnſon what mode he would adviſe him to follow in addreſſing ſuch an audience.—*J.* "Why, Sir, you muſt provide yourſelf with a good deal of extraneous matter, which you are to produce occaſionally, ſo as to fill up the time; for you muſt conſider, that they do not liſten much.—If you begin with the ſtrength of your cauſe, it may be loſt before they begin to liſten. When you catch a moment of attention, preſs the merits of the queſtion upon them." He ſaid, as to one point of the merits, that he thought "it would be a wrong thing to deprive the ſmall landholders of the privilege of aſſeſſing themſelves for making and repairing the high roads; *it was deſtroying ſo much liberty, without a good reaſon, which was always a bad thing.*" When Mr. B. mentioned this obſervation next day to Mr. Wilkes, he pleaſantly ſaid, "What! does *he* talk of liberty? *Liberty* is as ridiculous in *his* mouth as *Religion* in *mine.*" Mr. Wilkes's advice, as to the beſt mode of ſpeaking at the bar of the Houſe of Commons, was not more reſpectful towards the Senate, than that of Dr. Johnſon. "Be as impudent as you can, as merry as you can, and ſay whatever comes uppermoſt. Jack Lee is the beſt heard there of any

any Counſel; and he is the moſt impudent dog, and always abuſing us." Mr. Boſwell cenſured the coarſe invectives which were become faſhionable in the Houſe of Commons, and ſaid, that if members of parliament muſt attack each other perſonally in the heat of debate, it ſhould be done more genteelly.—*J.* "No, Sir; that would be much worſe. Abuſe is not ſo dangerous when there is no vehicle of wit or delicacy, no ſubtle conveyance. The difference between coarſe and refined abuſe is as the difference between being bruiſed by a club, and wounded by a poiſoned arrow. This poſition is elegantly expreſſed by Dr. Young.

'As the ſoft plume gives ſwiftneſs to the dart,
'Good breeding ſends the ſatire to the heart."

A gentleman obſerved to a Member of Parliament, "Mr. E. I don't mean to flatter, but when poſterity reads one of your ſpeeches in Parliament, it will be difficult to believe that you took ſo much pains, knowing with certainty that it could produce no effect, that not one vote would be gained by it."—*E.* "Waving your compliment to me, I ſhall ſay in general, that it is very well worth while for a man to take pains to ſpeak well in parliament. A man who has vanity ſpeaks to diſplay his talents; and if a man ſpeaks well, he gradually eſtabliſhes a certain

certain reputation and conſequence in the general opinion, which ſooner or later will have its political reward. Beſides, though not one vote is gained, a good ſpeech has its effect.—Though an act which has been ably oppoſed paſſes into a law, yet in its progreſs it is modelled, it is ſoftened in ſuch a manner, that we ſee plainly the miniſter has been told, that the members attached to him are ſo ſenſible of its injuſtice or abſurdity from what they have heard, that it muſt be altered."—JOHNSON. "And, Sir, there is a gratification of pride.—Though we cannot out-vote them we will out-argue them. They ſhall not do wrong without its being ſhewn both to themſelves and to the world."—*E.* "The Houſe of Commons is a mixed body (I except the minority, which I hold to be pure [ſmiling]; but I take the whole Houſe). It is a maſs by no means pure; but neither is it wholly corrupt, though there is a large proportion of corruption in it. There are many members who generally go with the miniſter, who will not go all lengths. There are many honeſt well-meaning country gentlemen who are in parliament only to keep up the conſequence of their families. Upon moſt of theſe a good ſpeech will have influence."—*J.* "We are all more or leſs governed by intereſt. But intereſt will not make us do every thing. In a

caſe

caſe which admits of doubt, we try to think on the ſide which is for our intereſt, and generally bring ourſelves to act accordingly. But the ſubject muſt admit of diverſity of colouring, it muſt receive a colour on that ſide. In the Houſe of Commons there are members enough who will not vote what is groſsly unjuſt or abſurd. No, Sir, there muſt always be right enough, or appearance of right, to keep wrong in countenance."—BOSWELL. "There is ſurely always a majority in parliament who have places, or who want to have them, and who therefore will be generally ready to ſupport government without requiring any pretext."—*E.* "True, Sir; that majority will always follow

'*Quo clamor vocat et turba faventium.*"—

B. "Well now, let us take the common phraſe, Place-hunters. I thought they had hunted without regard to any thing, juſt as their huntſman, the miniſter, leads, looking only to the prey."—*J.* "But, taking your metaphor, you know that in hunting there are few ſo deſperately keen as to follow without reſerve. Some do not chooſe to leap ditches and hedges and riſk their necks, or gallop over ſteeps, or even to dirty themſelves in bogs and mire."—*B.* "I am glad there are ſome good, quiet, moderate, political

political hunters."—*E.* "I believe in any body of men in England I ſhould have been in the minority; I have always been in the minority."—A gentleman preſent ſaid, "The Houſe of Commons reſembles a private company. How ſeldom is any man convinced by another's argument! paſſion and pride riſe againſt it."—Another aſked, "What would be the conſequence, if a Miniſter, ſure of a majority in the Houſe of Commons, ſhould reſolve that there ſhould be no ſpeaking at all upon his ſide."—*E.* "He muſt ſoon go out. That has been tried; but it was found it would not do."

Ruſſia being mentioned as likely to become a great empire, by the rapid increaſe of population, Johnſon ſaid, "Why, Sir, I ſee no proſpect of their propagating more. They can have no more children than they can get. I know of no way to make them breed more than they do. It is not from reaſon and prudence that people marry, but from inclination. A man is poor; he thinks, 'I cannot be worſe, and ſo I'll e'en take Peggy."—*B.* "But have not nations been more populous at one period than another?"—*J.* "Yes, Sir; but that has been owing to the people being leſs thinned at one period than another, whether by emigrations, war, or peſtilence, not by their being more or leſs prolific. Births at all times bear the ſame proportion to the ſame number of people."—*B.* "But, to conſider

conſider the ſtate of our own country; does not throwing a number of farms into one hand hurt population?—*J.* "Why no, Sir; the ſame quantity of food being produced, will be conſumed by the ſame number of mouths, though the people may be diſpoſed of in different ways. We ſee, if corn be dear, and butchers' meat cheap, the farmers all apply themſelves to the raiſing of corn, till it becomes plentiful and cheap, and then butchers' meat becomes dear; ſo that an equality is always preſerved. No, Sir, let fanciful men do as they will, depend upon it, it is difficult to diſturb the ſyſtem of life."—*B.* But, Sir, is it not a very bad thing for landlords to oppreſs their tenants, by raiſing their rents?"—*J.* "Very bad. But, Sir, it never can have any general influence; it may diſtreſs ſome individuals. For, conſider this: landlords cannot do without tenants. Now tenants will not give more for land, than land is worth. If they can make more of their money by keeping a ſhop, or any other way, they'll do it, and ſo oblige landlords to let land come back to a reaſonable rent, in order that they may get tenants. Land, in England, is an article of commerce. A tenant who pays his landlord his rent, thinks himſelf no more obliged to him than you think yourſelf obliged to a man in whoſe ſhop you buy a piece of goods.

goods. He knows the landlord does not let him have his land for leſs than he can get from others, in the ſame manner as the ſhopkeeper ſells his goods. No ſhopkeeper ſells a yard of ribband for ſixpence when ſevenpence is the current price.—*B.* "But, Sir, is it not better that tenants ſhould be dependent on landlords?—*J.* "Why, Sir, as there are many more tenants than landlords, perhaps, ſtrictly ſpeaking, we ſhould wiſh not. But if you pleaſe you may let your lands cheap, and ſo get the value, part in money and part in homage. I ſhould agree with you in that."—*B.* "So, Sir, you laugh at ſchemes of political improvement."—*J.* "Why, Sir, moſt ſchemes of political improvement are very laughable things."

He ſtrongly cenſured the licenſed ſtews at Rome. Mr. Boſwell ſaid, "So then, Sir, you would allow of no irregular intercourſe whatever between the ſexes.—JOHNSON. "To be ſure I would not, Sir. I would puniſh it much more than it is done, and ſo reſtrain it. In all countries there has been fornication, as in all countries there has been theft; but there may be more or leſs of the one, as well as of the other, in proportion to the force of law. All men will naturally commit fornication, as all men will naturally ſteal. And, Sir, it is very abſurd to argue, as has been often done, that proſtitutes

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are neceſſary to prevent the violent effects of appetite from violating the decent order of life; nay, ſhould be permitted, in order to preſerve the chaſtity of our wives and daughters. Depend upon it, Sir, ſevere laws, ſteadily enforced, would be ſufficient againſt thoſe evils, and would promote marriage."

On another occaſion Johnſon ſaid, "It may be queſtioned, whether there is not ſome miſtake as to the methods of employing the poor, ſeemingly on a ſuppoſition that there is a certain portion of work left undone for want of perſons to do it; but if that is otherwiſe, and all the materials we have are actually worked up, or all the manufactures we can uſe or diſpoſe of are already executed, then what is given to the poor who are to be ſet at work, muſt be taken from ſome who now have it; as time muſt be taken for learning, according to Sir William Petty's obſervation, a certain part of thoſe very materials that, as it is, are properly worked up, muſt be ſpoiled by the unſkilfulneſs of novices. We may apply to well-meaning, but misjudging perſons in particulars of this nature, what Giannone ſaid to a monk, who wanted what he called to *convert* him; '*Tu ſei Santo, ma Tu non ſei Filoſofo.*'—It is an unhappy circumſtance, that one might give away five hundred pounds in a year to thoſe that importune in the ſtreets, and not do any good."

He ſaid, the poor in England were better provided for than in any other country of the ſame extent; he did not mean little Cantons or petty Republics. "Where a great proportion of the people (ſaid he) are ſuffered to languiſh in helpleſs miſery, that country muſt be ill policed, and wretchedly governed; a decent proviſion for the poor, is the true teſt of civilization. Gentlemen of education, he obſerved, were pretty much the ſame in all countries; the condition of the lower orders, the poor eſpecially, was the true mark of national diſcrimination."

"Raiſing the wages of day-labourers (ſaid he) is wrong; for it does not make them live better, but only makes them idler, and idleneſs is a very bad thing for human nature."

Obſerving ſome beggars in the ſtreet, a gentleman remarked, that there was no civilized country in the world, where the miſery of want in the loweſt claſſes of the people was prevented. —JOHNSON. "I believe, Sir, there is not; but it is better that ſome ſhould be unhappy, than that none ſhould be happy, which would be the caſe in a general ſtate of equality."

"At dinner one day at Mr. Hoole's with Dr. Johnſon (ſays Mr. Boſwell), when Mr. Nicol, the King's bookſeller, and I, attempted to controvert the maxim, 'better that ten guilty ſhould

eſcape, than one innocent perſon ſuffer;' we were anſwered by Dr. Johnſon with great power of reaſoning and eloquence. He ably ſhewed, that unleſs civil inſtitutions inſured protection to the innocent, all the confidence which mankind ſhould have in them would be loſt."

Talking on the ſubject of Toleration, one day when ſome friends were with him in his ſtudy, he made a remark, that the State has a right to regulate the religion of the people, who are the children of the State. A clergyman having readily acquieſced in this, Johnſon, who loved diſcuſſion, obſerved, "But, Sir, you muſt go round to other States than our own. You do not know what a Bramin has to ſay for himſelf. In ſhort, Sir, I have got no further than this: Every man has a right to utter what he thinks truth, and every other man has a right to knock him down for it. Martyrdom is the teſt."

At another time, when in a literary converſation at Mr. Dilly's one of the company introduced the ſubject of toleration, Johnſon ſaid, "Every Society has a right to preſerve public peace and order, and therefore has a good right to prohibit the propagation of opinions which have a dangerous tendency. To ſay the *magiſtrate* has this right, is uſing an inadequate word: it is the *Society* for which the

magiſtrate is agent. He may be morally or theologically wrong in reſtraining the propagation of opinions which he thinks dangerous, but he is politically right."—DR. MAYO. "I am of opinion, Sir, that every man is entitled to liberty of conſcience in religion; and that the magiſtrate cannot reſtrain that right."—JOHNSON. "Sir, I agree with you. Every man has a right to liberty of conſcience, and with that the magiſtrate cannot interfere. People confound liberty of thinking with liberty of talking; nay with liberty of preaching. Every man has a phyſical right to think as he pleaſes; for it cannot be diſcovered how he thinks. He has not a moral right, for he ought to inform himſelf, and think juſtly. But, Sir, no member of a ſociety has a right to *teach* any doctrine contrary to what the ſociety holds to be true. The magiſtrate, I ſay, may be wrong in what he thinks; but while he thinks himſelf right, he may and ought to enforce what he thinks."—*M.* "Then, Sir, we are to remain always in error, and truth never can prevail; and the magiſtrate was right in perſecuting the firſt chriſtians."—*J.* "Sir, the only method by which religious truth can be eſtabliſhed is by martyrdom. The magiſtrate has a right to enforce what he thinks; and he who is conſcious of the truth has a right

to ſuffer. I am afraid there is no other way of aſcertaining the truth, but by perſecution on the one hand, and enduring it on the other."—GOLDSMITH. "But how is a man to act, Sir? Though firmly convinced of the truth of his doctrine, may he not think it wrong to expoſe himſelf to perſecution? Has he a right to do ſo? Is it not, as it were, committing voluntary ſuicide?"—*J.* "Sir, as to voluntary ſuicide, as you call it, there are twenty thouſand men in an army who will go without ſcruple to be ſhot at, and mount a breach, for fivepence a day."—*G.* "But have they a moral right to do this?"—*J.* "Nay, Sir, if you will not take the univerſal opinion of mankind, I have nothing to ſay. If mankind cannot defend their own way of thinking, I cannot defend it. Sir, if a man is in doubt whether it would be better for him to expoſe himſelf to martyrdom or not, he ſhould not do it. He muſt be convinced that he has a delegation from heaven."—*G.* "I would conſider whether there is the greater chance of good or evil upon the whole. If I ſee a man who has fallen into a well, I would wiſh to help him out; but if there is a greater probability that he ſhall pull me in, than that I ſhould pull him out, I would not attempt it. So were I to go to Turkey, I might wiſh to convert the Grand

Signior to the Chriſtian faith; but when I conſidered that I ſhould probably be put to death without effectuating my purpoſe in any degree, I ſhould keep myſelf quiet."—*J.* "Sir, you muſt conſider that we have perfect and imperfect obligations. Perfect obligations, which are generally not to do ſomething, are clear and poſitive; as 'thou ſhalt not kill.' But charity, for inſtance, is not definable by limits. It is a duty to give to the poor; but no man can ſay how much another ſhould give to the poor, or when a man has given too little to ſave his ſoul. In the ſame manner, it is a duty to inſtruct the ignorant, and of conſequence to convert infidels to chriſtianity; but no man in the common courſe of things is obliged to carry this to ſuch a degree as to incur the danger of martyrdom, as no man is obliged to ſtrip himſelf to the ſhirt in order to give charity. I have ſaid, that a man muſt be perſuaded that he has a particular delegation from Heaven."—*G.* "How is this to be known? Our firſt reformers, who were burnt for not believing bread and wine to be Chriſt—" *J.* (interrupting him), "Sir, they were not burnt for not believing bread and wine to be Chriſt, but for inſulting thoſe who did believe it. And, Sir, when the firſt reformers began, they did not intend to be martyred; as many

of

of them ran away as could."—BOSWELL. "But, Sir, there was your countryman, Elwal, who you told me once challenged King George with his black-guards, and his red-guards."—*J.* "My countryman, Elwal, Sir, ſhould have been put in the ſtocks; a proper pulpit for him; and he'd have had a numerous audience. A man who preaches in the ſtocks will always have hearers enough."—*B.* "But Elwal thought himſelf in the right."—*J.* "We are not providing for mad people; there are places for them in the neighbourhood." (meaning Moorfields.)—*M.* "But, Sir, is it not very hard that I ſhould not be allowed to teach my children what I really believe to be the truth?"—*J.* "Why, Sir, you might contrive to teach your children *extra ſcandalum*; but, Sir, the magiſtrate, if he knows it, has a right to reſtrain you. Suppoſe you teach your children to be thieves?"—*M.* "This is making a joke of the ſubject."—*J.* "Nay, Sir, take it thus: that you teach them the community of goods, for which there are as many plauſible arguments as for moſt erroneous doctrines. You teach them, that all things at firſt were in common, and that no man had a right to any thing but as he laid his hands upon it; and that this ſtill is, or ought to be, the rule amongſt mankind. Here, Sir, you ſap a great principle in

ſociety—property. And don't you think the magiſtrate would have a right to prevent you? Or ſuppoſe you ſhould teach your children the notion of the Adamites, and they ſhould run naked in the ſtreets, would not the magiſtrate have a right to flog them into their doublets?" —*M.* "I think the magiſtrate has no right to interfere till there is ſome overt act."—*B.* "So, Sir, though he ſees an enemy to the State charging a blunderbuſs, he is not to interfere till it is fired off."—*M.* "He muſt be ſure of its direction againſt the ſtate."—*J.* "The magiſtrate is to judge of that. He has no right to reſtrain your thinking, becauſe the evil centers in yourſelf. If a man were ſitting at this table, and chopping off his fingers, the magiſtrate, as guardian of the community, has no authority to reſtrain him, however he might do it from kindneſs as a parent. Though, indeed, upon more conſideration, I think he may; as it is probable, that he who is chopping off his own fingers, may ſoon proceed to chop off thoſe of other people. If I think it right to ſteal Mr. Dilly's plate, I am a bad man; but he can ſay nothing to me. If I make an open declaration that I think ſo, he will keep me out of his houſe. If I put forth my hand, I ſhall be ſent to Newgate. This is the gradation of thinking, preaching, and acting;

acting: if a man thinks erroneouſly, he may keep his thoughts to himſelf, and nobody will trouble him; if he preaches erroneous doctrine, ſociety may expel him; if he acts in conſequence of it, the law takes place, and he is hanged."—*M.* "But, Sir, ought not Chriſtians to have liberty of conſcience?"—*J.* "I have already told you ſo, Sir. You are coming back to where you were."—*B.* "Dr. Mayo is always taking a return poſt-chaiſe, and going the ſtage over again. He has it at half price."—*J.* "Dr. Mayo, like other champions for unlimited toleration, has got a ſet of words *. Sir, it is no matter, politically, whether the magiſtrate be right or wrong. Suppoſe a club were to be formed to drink confuſion to King George the Third, and a happy reſtoration to Charles the Third; this would be very bad with reſpect to the State; but every member of that club muſt either conform to its rules, or be turned out of it. Old Baxter, I remember, maintains, that the magiſtrate ſhould 'tolerate all things that are tolerable.' This is no

* Dr. Mayo's calm temper and ſteady perſeverance, Mr. Boſwell tells us, rendered him an admirable ſubject for the exerciſe of Dr. Johnſon's powerful abilities. He never flinched; but, after reiterated blows, remained ſeemingly unmoved as at the firſt. The ſcintillations of Johnſon's genius flaſhed every time he was ſtruck, without his receiving any injury. Hence he obtained the epithet of THE LITERARY ANVIL.

good

good definition of toleration upon any principle; but it ſhews that he thought ſome things were not tolerable."—TOPLADY. "Sir, you have untwiſted this difficult ſubject with great dexterity."

LIFE.

JOHNSON recommended to Mr. Boſwell to keep a journal of his life, full and unreſerved. He ſaid, it would be a very good exerciſe, and would yield him great ſatisfaction when the particulars were faded from his remembrance. He counſelled him to keep it private, and ſaid he might ſurely have a friend who would burn it in caſe of his death. Mr. Boſwell obſerved, that he was afraid he put into his journal too many little incidents.—JOHNSON. "There is nothing, Sir, too little for ſo little a creature as man. It is by ſtudying little things that we attain the great art of having as little miſery and as much happineſs as poſſible."—Yet he ſaid it was not neceſſary to mention ſuch trifles as that meat was too much or too little done, or that the weather was fair or rainy. He ſaid, that he had twelve or fourteen times attempted

tempted to keep a journal of his life, but never could perſevere. "The great thing to be recorded (ſaid he) is the ſtate of your own mind; and you ſhould write down every thing that you remember, for you cannot judge at firſt what is good or bad; and write immediately while the impreſſion is freſh, for it will not be the ſame a week afterwards. A man may write upon a card a day all that is neceſſary to be written, after he has had experience of life. At firſt there is a great deal to be written, becauſe there is a great deal of novelty; but when once a man has ſettled his opinions, there is ſeldom much to be ſet down."

"There is nothing wonderful (ſaid he) in the journal which we ſee Swift kept in London, for it contains ſlight topicks, and it might ſoon be written."

"Life (he obſerved on another occaſion) is but ſhort; no time can be afforded but for the indulgence of real ſorrow, or conteſts upon queſtions ſeriouſly momentous. Let us not throw away any of our days upon uſeleſs reſentment, or contend who ſhall hold out longeſt in ſtubborn malignity. It is beſt not to be angry; and beſt, in the next place, to be quickly reconciled."

Again: "Life admits not of delays; when pleaſure can be had, it is fit to catch it. Every

hour takes away part of the things that pleaſe us, and perhaps part of our diſpoſition to be pleaſed. When I came to Litchfield (ſaid he to Mr. Boſwell), I found my old friend Harry Jackſon dead. It was a loſs, and a loſs not to be repaired, as he was one of the companions of my childhood. I hope we may long continue to gain friends, but the friends which merit or uſefulneſs can procure us, are not able to ſupply the place of old acquaintance, with whom the days of youth may be retraced, and thoſe images revived which gave the earlieſt delight. If you and I live to be much older, we ſhall take great delight in talking over the Hebridean Journey."

At another time he ſaid, "Life is not long, and too much of it muſt not paſs in idle deliberation how it ſhall be ſpent; deliberation which thoſe who begin it by prudence, and continue it with ſubtilty, muſt, after long expence of thought, conclude by chance. To prefer one future mode of life to another, upon juſt reaſons, requires faculties which it has not pleaſed our Creator to give us.

"If therefore the profeſſion you have choſen has ſome unexpected inconveniencies, conſole yourſelf by reflecting that no profeſſion is without them; and that all the importunities and perplexities of buſineſs are ſoftneſs and luxury, compared

compared with the inceſſant cravings of vacancy, and the unſatisfactory expedients of idleneſs."

The Biſhop of St. Aſaph once obſerved, that it appeared from Horace's writings that he was a cheerful contented man. JOHNSON. "We have no reaſon to believe that, my Lord. Are we to think Pope was happy, becauſe he ſays ſo in his writings? We ſee in his writings what he wiſhed the ſtate of his mind to appear. Dr. Young, who pined for preferment, talks with contempt of it in his writings, and affects to deſpiſe every thing that he did not deſpiſe." —BISHOP OF ST. ASAPH. "He was, like other chaplains, looking for vacancies; but that is not peculiar to the clergy. I remember when I was in the army, after the battle of Lafeldt, the officers ſeriouſly grumbled that no general was killed."—Mr. Boſwell maintained, that Horace was wrong in placing happineſs in *nil admirari*; for that he thought admiration one of the moſt agreeable of all our feelings, and regretted that he had loſt much of his diſpoſition to admire, which people generally do as they advance in life.—*J.* "Sir, as a man advances in life, he gets what is better than admiration—judgment to eſtimate things at their true value."—I ſtill inſiſted (ſays Mr. Boſwell) that admiration was more pleaſing than

than judgment, as love is more pleaſing than friendſhip. The feeling of friendſhip is like that of being comfortably filled with roaſt-beef; love, like being enlivened with champagne. *J.* "No, Sir; admiration and love are like being intoxicated with champagne; judgment and friendſhip like being enlivened. Waller has hit upon the ſame thought with you; but I don't believe you have borrowed from Waller. I wiſh you would enable yourſelf to borrow more."

An ingenious gentleman was mentioned, concerning whom it was obſerved, that he had a conſtant firmneſs of mind; for after a laborious day, and amidſt a multiplicity of cares and anxieties, he would ſit down with his ſiſters, and be quite cheerful and good humoured. Such a diſpoſition, it was remarked, was a happy gift of nature.—JOHNSON. "I do not think ſo; a man has from nature a certain portion of mind; the uſe he makes of it depends upon his own free will. That a man has always the ſame firmneſs of mind I do not ſay, becauſe every man feels his mind leſs firm at one time than at another; but I think a man's being in a good or bad humour depends upon his will."

Dr. Johnſon on ſome occaſion talked with approbation of one who had attained to the ſtate

ſtate of the philoſophical wiſe man, that is, to have no want of any thing. "Then, Sir (ſaid Mr. Boſwell), the ſavage is a wiſe man."—"Sir (replied Johnſon), I do not mean ſimply being without—but not having a want."—"Mr. Boſwell maintained, againſt this propoſition, that it was better to have fine clothes, for inſtance, than not to feel the want of them.—JOHNSON. "No, Sir; fine clothes are good only as they ſupply the want of other means of procuring reſpect. Was Charles the Twelfth, think you, leſs reſpected for his coarſe blue coat and black ſtock? And you find the King of Pruſſia dreſſes plain, becauſe the dignity of his character is ſufficient."

Mr. Boſwell at another time talked to him of miſery being "the doom of man," in this life, as diſplayed in his 'Vanity of Human Wiſhes;' yet obſerved, that things were done upon the ſuppoſition of happineſs; grand houſes were built, fine gardens were made, ſplendid places of public amuſement were contrived, and crowded with company. "Alas, Sir (ſaid Johnſon), theſe are only ſtruggles for happineſs. When I firſt entered Ranelagh, it gave an expanſion and gay ſenſation to my mind, ſuch as I never experienced any where elſe. But, as Xerxes wept when he viewed his immenſe army, and conſidered that not one of that

that great multitude would be alive a hundred years afterwards, ſo it went to my heart to conſider that there was not one in all that brilliant circle, that was not afraid to go home and think; but that the thoughts of each individual there would be diſtreſſing when alone *."

Mr. Boſwell ſuggeſted, that being in love and flattered with hopes of ſucceſs, or having ſome favourite ſcheme in view for the next day, might prevent that wretchedneſs of which they had been talking. "Why, Sir, (ſaid Johnſon) it may ſometimes be as you ſuppoſe; but my concluſion is in general but too true."

Mr. Boſwell tells us, that he once teized Johnſon with fanciful apprehenſions of unhappineſs. A moth having fluttered round the candle, and burnt itſelf, the Doctor laid hold of this little incident to admoniſh him, ſaying, with a ſly look, and in a ſolemn but quiet tone, "That creature was its own tormentor, and I believe its name was BOSWELL."

One evening (ſays Mr. B.) Dr. Johnſon was engaged to ſup with me at my lodgings in Downing-ſtreet, Weſtminſter. But on the

* "This reflection (ſays Mr. Boſwell) was experimentally juſt. The feeling of languor, which ſucceeds the animation of gaiety, is itſelf a very ſevere pain; and when the mind is then vacant, a thouſand diſappointments and vexations ruſh in and excruciate."

preceding

preceding night my landlord having behaved very rudely to me and ſome company who were with me, I had reſolved not to remain another night in his houſe. I was exceedingly uneaſy at the awkward appearance I ſuppoſed I ſhould make to Johnſon and the other gentlemen whom I had invited, not being able to receive them at home, and being obliged to order ſupper at the Mitre. I went to Johnſon in the morning, and talked of it as of a ſerious diſtreſs." He laughed, and ſaid, "Conſider, Sir, how inſignificant this will appear a twelvemonth hence." —Were this conſideration to be applied to moſt of the little vexatious incidents of life, by which our quiet is too often diſturbed, it would prevent many painful ſenſations. I have tried it frequently, with good effect. "There is nothing (continued Johnſon) in this mighty misfortune; nay, we ſhall be better at the Mitre."—I told him that I had been at Sir John Fielding's office, complaining of my landlord, and had been informed, that though I had taken my lodgings for a year, I might, upon proof of his bad behaviour, quit them when I pleaſed, without being under an obligation to pay rent for any longer time than while I poſſeſſed them. The fertility of Johnſon's mind could ſhew itſelf even upon ſo ſmall a matter as this. "Why, Sir (ſaid he), I

ſuppoſe this muſt be the law, ſince you have been told ſo in Bow-ſtreet. But if your landlord could hold you to your bargain, and the lodgings ſhould be yours for a year, you may certainly uſe them as you think fit. So, Sir, you may quarter two life-guardmen upon him; or you may ſend the greateſt ſcoundrel you can find into your apartments; or you may ſay that you want to make ſome experiments in natural philoſophy, and may burn a large quantity of aſſafœtida in his houſe."

A reſpectable perſon was one day mentioned to Johnſon as of a very ſtrong mind, but as having little of that tenderneſs which is common to human nature; as an inſtance of which, when it was ſuggeſted to him that he ſhould invite his ſon, who had been ſettled ten years in foreign parts, to come home and pay him a viſit, his anſwer was, "No, no, let him mind his buſineſs." Johnſon obſerved, "I do not agree with him, Sir, in this. Getting money is not all a man's buſineſs; to cultivate kindneſs is a valuable part of the buſineſs of life."

At another time the converſation turned on the prevailing practice of going to the Eaſt Indies in queſt of wealth. "A man (ſaid Johnſon) had better have ten thouſand pounds at the end of ten years paſſed in England,

than twenty thouſand pounds at the end of ten years paſſed in India, becauſe you muſt compute what you *give* for money; and a man, who has lived ten years in India, has given up ten years of ſocial comfort, and all thoſe advantages which ariſe from living in England. The ingenious Mr. Brown, diſtinguiſhed by the name of *Capability Brown*, told me, that he was once at the ſeat of Lord Clive, who had returned from India with great wealth; and that he ſhewed him at the door of his bed-chamber a large cheſt, which he ſaid he had once had full of gold; upon which Brown obſerved, 'I am glad you can bear it ſo near your bed-chamber."

Goldſmith one day obſerved to Johnſon, "I think, Sir, you don't go to the theatres now. You give yourſelf no more concern about a new play, than if you had never had any thing to do with the ſtage."—"Why, Sir (ſaid Johnſon), our taſtes greatly alter. The lad does not care for the child's rattle, and the old man does not care for the young man's miſtreſs."—"GOLDSMITH. "Nay, Sir; but your muſe was not a miſtreſs."—JOHNSON. "Sir, I do not think ſhe was. But as we advance in the journey of life, we drop ſome of the things which have pleaſed us; whether it be that we are fatigued and don't chooſe to

carry ſo many things any farther, or that we find other things which we like better."—Boswell. "But, Sir, why don't you give us ſomething in ſome other way?"—*G.* "Ay, Sir, we have a claim upon you."—*J.* "No, Sir, I am not obliged to do any more. No man is obliged to do as much as he can do. A man is to have part of his life to himſelf. If a ſoldier has fought a good many campaigns, he is not to be blamed if he retires to eaſe and tranquillity. A phyſician who has practiſed long in a great city may be excuſed if he retires to a ſmall town, and takes leſs practice. Now, Sir, the good I can do by my converſation bears the ſame proportion to the good I can do by my writings, that the practice of a phyſician retired to a ſmall town does to his practice in a great city."

To Mr. Boſwell (who was about to leave London with regret) he ſaid, "I wiſh you would a little correct or reſtrain your imagination, and imagine that happineſs, ſuch as life admits, may be had at other places as well as at London. Without aſſerting ſtoiciſm, it may be ſaid, that it is our buſineſs to exempt ourſelves as much as we can from the power of external things. There is but one ſolid baſis of happineſs; and that is, the reaſonable hope of a happy futurity. This may be had every where.

where. I do not blame your preference of London to other places, for it is really to be preferred, if the choice is free; but few have the choice of their place, or their manner of life; and mere pleaſure ought not to be the prime motive of action."

At another time he made this excellent obſervation: "Life, to be worthy of a rational being, muſt be always in progreſſion; we muſt always propoſe to do more or better than in time paſt. The mind is enlarged and elevated by mere purpoſes, though they end, as they began, by airy contemplation. We compare and judge, though we do not practiſe."

Mr. Boſwell having mentioned Hume's notion, that all who are happy are equally happy, a little miſs with a new gown at a dancing-ſchool ball, a general at the head of a victorious army, and an orator after having made an eloquent ſpeech in a great aſſembly, Johnſon ſaid, "Sir, that all who are happy are equally happy, is not true. A peaſant and a philoſopher may be equally *ſatisfied*, but not equally *happy*. Happineſs conſiſts in the multiplicity of agreeable conſciouſneſs. A peaſant has not capacity for having equal happineſs with a philoſopher." This very queſtion was once happily illuſtrated in oppoſition to Hume by the Reverend Mr. Robert Brown, at

Utrecht. "A ſmall drinking glaſs and a large one (ſaid he) may be equally full; but the large one holds more than the ſmall."

On another occaſion we find Johnſon remarking, that "Every man is to take exiſtence on the terms on which it is given to him. To ſome men it is given on condition of not taking liberties which other men may take without much harm. One may drink wine, and be nothing the worſe for it; on another, wine may have effects ſo inflammatory as to injure him both in body and mind."

A gentleman mentioned the advice given us by philoſophers, to conſole ourſelves, when diſtreſſed or embarraſſed, by thinking of thoſe who are in a worſe ſituation than ourſelves; but this, he obſerved, could not apply to all, for there muſt be ſome who have nobody worſe than they are. "Why to be ſure, Sir, there are (ſaid Johnſon); but they don't know it. There is no being ſo poor and ſo contemptible, who does not think there is ſomebody ſtill poorer, and ſtill more contemptible.

"That man is never happy for the preſent, is ſo true, that all his relief from unhappineſs is only forgetting himſelf for a little while. Life is a progreſs from want to want, not from enjoyment to enjoyment."

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At another time he maintained, that a boy at ſchool is the happieſt of human beings. Mr. B. ſupported a different opinion, namely, that a man is happier, and enlarged upon the anxiety and ſufferings which are endured at ſchool.—"Ah! Sir (ſaid Johnſon), a boy's being flogged is not ſo ſevere as a man's having the hiſs of the world againſt him. Men have a ſolicitude about fame, and the greater ſhare they have of it, the more afraid are they of loſing it."

The modes of living in different countries, and the various views with which men travel in queſt of new ſcenes, having been talked of, a learned gentleman who held a conſiderable office in the law expatiated on the happineſs of a ſavage life, and mentioned an inſtance of an officer who had actually lived for ſome time in the wilds of America, of whom, when in that ſtate, he quoted this reflection with an air of admiration, as if it had been deeply philoſophical:—'Here am I, free and unreſtrained, amidſt the rude magnificence of Nature, with this Indian woman by my ſide, and this gun, with which I can procure food when I want it: what more can be deſired for human happineſs.' "Do not allow yourſelf, Sir (ſaid Johnſon), to be impoſed upon by ſuch groſs abſurdity. It is ſad ſtuff; it is brutiſh. If a bull could ſpeak, he might as well exclaim,—'Here

am I with this cow and this graſs ; what being can enjoy greater felicity ?"

Johnſon once ſaid, " A madman loves to be with people whom he fears ; not as a dog fears the laſh ; but of whom he ſtands in awe*." He added, " Madmen are all ſenſual in the lower ſtages of the diſtemper. They are eager for gratifications to ſooth their minds, and divert their attention from the miſery which they ſuffer; but when they grow very ill, pleaſure is too weak for them, and they ſeek for pain. Employment, Sir, and hardſhips prevent melancholy. I ſuppoſe in all our army in America there was not one man who went mad."

It was a frequent obſervation with Johnſon, that there was more to be endured than enjoyed, in the general condition of human life ; and he often quoted theſe lines of Dryden :

" Strange cozenage ! none would live paſt years again,
" Yet all hope pleaſure from what ſtill remain."

For his part, he ſaid, he never paſſed that week in his life which he would wiſh to repeat, were an angel to make the propoſal to him.

* On this Mr. B. remarks : "I was ſtruck with the juſtice of this obſervation. To be with thoſe of whom a perſon, whoſe mind is wavering and dejected, ſtands in awe, repreſſes and compoſes an uneaſy tumult of ſpirits, and conſoles him with the contemplation of ſomething ſteady, and at leaſt comparatively great."

DEATH.

DEATH.

MR. BOSWELL tells us, that he once, in a converſation with Johnſon, and other company, expreſſed a horror at the thoughts of death. Mrs. Knowles, the Quaker, who was of the party, ſaid, "Nay, thou ſhould'ſt not have a horror for what is the gate of life."—Johnſon (ſtanding upon the hearth rolling about with a ſerious, ſolemn, and ſomewhat gloomy air) obſerved, that no rational man could die without uneaſy apprehenſion.—Mrs. KNOWLES. "The Scriptures tell us, 'The righteous ſhall have hope in his death."—JOHNSON. "Yes, Madam; that is, he ſhall not have deſpair. But conſider, his hope of ſalvation muſt be founded on the terms on which it is promiſed, that the mediation of our SAVIOUR ſhall be applied to us, namely, obedience; and where obedience has failed, then, as ſuppletory to it, repentance. But what man can ſay that his obedience has been ſuch as he would approve of in another, or even in himſelf upon cloſe examination, or that his repentance has not been ſuch as to require being repented of? No man can be ſure that his obedience and repentance will obtain ſalvation."—MRS. K. "But

divine intimation of acceptance may be made to the ſoul."—*J.* "Madam, it may; but I ſhould not think the better of a man who ſhould tell me on his death-bed he was ſure of ſalvation. A man cannot be ſure himſelf that he has divine intimation of acceptance; much leſs can he make others ſure that he has it."—*B.* "Then, Sir, we muſt be contented to acknowledge that death is a terrible thing."—*J.* "Yes, Sir. I have made no approaches to a ſtate which can look on it as not terrible."—Mrs. K. (ſeeming to enjoy a pleaſing ſerenity in the perſuaſion of benignant divine light) "Does not St. Paul ſay, 'I have fought the good fight of faith, I have finiſhed my courſe: henceforth is laid up for me a crown of life?"—*J.* "Yes, Madam; but here was a man inſpired, a man who had been converted by ſupernatural interpoſition."—*B.* "In proſpect death is dreadful; but in fact we find that people die eaſy."—*J.* "Why, Sir, moſt people have not *thought* much of the matter, ſo cannot *ſay* much, and it is ſuppoſed they die eaſy. Few believe it certain they are then to die; and thoſe who do, ſet themſelves to behave with reſolution, as a man does who is going to be hanged. He is not the leſs unwilling to be hanged."—Miss Seward. "There is one mode of the fear of death, which

which is certainly abſurd; and that is the dread of annihilation, which is only a pleaſing ſleep without a dream."—*J.* "It is neither pleaſing, nor ſleep; it is nothing. Now mere exiſtence is ſo much better than nothing, that one would rather exiſt even in pain, than not exiſt."—*B.* "If annihilation be nothing, then exiſting in pain is not a comparative ſtate, but is a poſitive evil, which I cannot think we ſhould chooſe. I muſt be allowed to differ here; and it would leſſen the hope of a future ſtate founded on the argument that the Supreme Being, who is good as he is great, will hereafter compenſate for our preſent ſufferings in this life. For if exiſtence, ſuch as we have it here, be comparatively a good, we have no reaſon to complain, though no more of it ſhould be given to us. But if our only ſtate of exiſtence were in this world, then we might with ſome reaſon complain that we are ſo diſſatisfied with our enjoyments compared with our deſires."—*J.* "The lady confounds annihilation, which is nothing, with the apprehenſion of it, which is dreadful. It is in the apprehenſion of it that the horror of annihilation conſiſts."

"When we were alone (ſays Mr. B.) I again introduced the ſubject of death, and endeavoured to maintain, that the fear of it might be got

got over. I told him, that David Hume had ſaid to me, that he was no more uneaſy to think he ſhould *not be* after this life, than that he *had not been* before he began to exiſt.—" Sir (ſaid Johnſon), if he really thinks ſo, his perceptions are diſturbed: he is mad: if he does not think ſo, he lies. He may tell you, he holds his finger in the flame of a candle, without feeling pain; would you believe him? When he dies, he at leaſt gives up all he has." — *B.* " Foote, Sir, told me, that when he was very ill, he was not afraid to die."—*J.* " It is not true, Sir. Hold a piſtol to Foote's breaſt, or to Hume's breaſt, and threaten to kill them, and you'll ſee how they behave."—*B.* " But may we not fortify our minds for the approach of death.*?" To this queſtion he anſwered, in a paſſion, " No, Sir, let it alone. It matters not how a man dies, but how he lives. The act of dying is not of importance, it laſts ſo ſhort a

*" Here (ſays Mr. B.), I am ſenſible I was in the wrong, to bring before his view what he ever looked upon with horror; for although when in a celeſtial frame, in his 'Vanity of Human Wiſhes,' he has ſuppoſed death to be 'kind Nature's ſignal for retreat,' from this ſtate of being to 'a happier ſeat,' his thoughts upon this awful change were in general full of diſmal apprehenſions. His mind reſembled the vaſt amphitheatre at Rome. In the center ſtood his judgment, which, like a mighty gladiator, combated thoſe apprehenſions that, like the wild beaſts of the Arena, were all around in cells, ready to be let out upon him. After a conflict, he drives them back into their dens; but not killing them, they were ſtill aſſailing him."

time,"

time." He added (with an earneſt look), "A man knows it muſt be ſo, and ſubmits. It will do him no good to whine."

This ſubject being reſumed on another occaſion, Johnſon ſaid, "Some people are not afraid of death, becauſe they look upon ſalvation as the effect of an abſolute decree, and think they feel in themſelves the marks of ſanctification. Others, and thoſe the moſt rational in my opinion, look upon ſalvation as conditional; and as they never can be ſure that they have complied with the conditions, they are afraid."

A gentleman was mentioned to him as having been formerly gloomy from low ſpirits, and much diſtreſſed by the fear of death, but as being now uniformly placid, and contemplating his diſſolution without any perturbation.—"Sir (ſaid Johnſon), this is only a diſordered imagination taking a different turn."

To Mrs. Williams, a little before her death, he ſaid, "Oh! my friend, the approach of death is very dreadful. I am afraid to think on that which I know I cannot avoid. It is in vain to look round and round for that help which cannot be had. Yet we hope and hope, and fancy that he who has lived to-day may live to-morrow. But let us learn to derive our hope only from GOD."

Mr.

Mr. Boſwell and Johnſon having one day fallen into a very ſerious frame of mind, in which mutual expreſſions of kindneſs paſſed between them, the former talked with regret of the ſad inevitable certainty that one of them muſt ſurvive the other.—"Yes, Sir (ſaid Johnſon), that is an affecting conſideration. I remember Swift, in one of his letters to Pope, ſays, 'I intend to come over, that we may meet once more; and when we muſt part, it is what happens to all human beings."—*B.* "The hope that we ſhall ſee our departed friends again muſt ſupport the mind."—*J.* "Why, yes Sir."—*B.* "There is a ſtrange unwillingneſs to part with life, independent of ſerious fears as to futurity. A reverend friend of ours (naming him) tells me, that he feels an uncaſineſs at the thoughts of leaving his houſe, his ſtudy, his books."—*J.* "This is fooliſh in ———. A man need not be uneaſy on theſe grounds; for, as he will retain his conſciouſneſs, he may ſay with the philoſopher, *Omnia mea mecum porto.*"

The horror of death which had always been obſervable in Dr. Johnſon appeared remarkably ſtrong one evening. "I ventured to tell him (ſays Mr. B.) that I had been, for moments of my life, not afraid of death; therefore I could ſuppoſe another man in that ſtate of mind for a conſi-

conſiderable ſpace of time. He ſaid, he never had a moment in which death was not terrible to him. He added, that it had been obſerved, that ſcarcely any man dies in public but with apparent reſolution, from that deſire of praiſe which never quits us." It was obſerved, that Dr. Dodd ſeemed to be willing to die, and full of hopes and happineſs. "Sir (ſaid he), Dr. Dodd would have given both his hands and both his legs to have lived. The better a man is, the more afraid is he of death, having a clearer view of infinite purity." He owned, that our being in an unhappy uncertainty as to our ſalvation, was myſterious; and ſaid, "Ah! we muſt wait till we are in another ſtate of being, to have many things explained to us."—Even the powerful mind of Johnſon ſeemed foiled by futurity. But I thought (adds Mr. Boſwell) that the gloom of uncertainty in ſolemn religious ſpeculation, being mingled with hope, was yet more conſolatory than the emptineſs of infidelity. A man can live in thick air, but periſhes in an exhauſted receiver."

Dr. Johnſon was once much pleaſed with a remark made by General Paoli:—"That it is impoſſible not to be afraid of death; and that thoſe who at the time of dying are not afraid, are not thinking of death, but of applauſe, or ſomething elſe, which keeps death out of their ſight;

ſight: ſo that all men are equally afraid of death when they ſee it; only ſome have a power of turning their ſight away from it better than others."

Johnſon's own account of his views of futurity will appear truly rational; and may, perhaps, impreſs the unthinking with ſeriouſneſs:—

"I never thought confidence with reſpect to futurity any part of the character of a brave, a wiſe, or a good man. Bravery has no place where it can avail nothing; wiſdom impreſſes ſtrongly the conſciouſneſs of thoſe faults, of which it is, perhaps, itſelf an aggravation; and goodneſs, always wiſhing to be better, and imputing every deficiency to criminal negligence, and every fault to voluntary corruption, never dares to ſuppoſe the condition of forgiveneſs fulfilled, nor what is wanting in the crime ſupplied by penitence.

"This is the ſtate of the beſt; but what muſt be the condition of him whoſe heart will not ſuffer him to rank himſelf among the beſt, or among the good? Such muſt be his dread of the approaching trial, as will leave him little attention to the opinion of thoſe whom he is leaving for ever; and the ſerenity that is not felt, it can be no virtue to feign."

The

The ſubject of grief for the loſs of relations and friends being one day introduced, Mr. B. obſerved, that it was ſtrange to conſider how ſoon it in general wears away. Dr. Taylor mentioned a gentleman of the neighbourhood as the only inſtance he had ever known of a perſon who had endeavoured to *retain* grief.—He told Dr. Taylor, that after his Lady's death, which affected him deeply, he *reſolved* that the grief, which he cheriſhed with a kind of ſacred fondneſs, ſhould be laſting; but that he found he could not keep it long."—"All grief (ſaid Johnſon) for what cannot in the courſe of nature be helped, ſoon wears away; in ſome ſooner, indeed, in ſome later; but it never continues very long, unleſs where there is madneſs, ſuch as will make a man have pride ſo fixed in his mind, as to imagine himſelf a king, or any other paſſion in an unreaſonable way: for all unneceſſary grief is unwiſe, and therefore will not be long retained by a ſound mind. If, indeed, the cauſe of our grief is occaſioned by our own miſconduct, if grief is mingled with remorſe of conſcience, it ſhould be laſting."—*B.* "But, Sir, we do not approve of a man who very ſoon forgets the loſs of a wife or a friend."—*J.* "Sir, we diſapprove of him, not becauſe he ſoon forgets his grief; for the ſooner it is forgotten the better; but becauſe we ſup-

poſe, that if he forgets his wife or his friend ſoon, he has not had much affection for them."

To one who had recently loſt a wife, Johnſon obſerved, "The loſs which you have lately ſuffered, I felt many years ago, and know therefore how much has been taken from you, and how little help can be had from conſolation. He that outlives a wife whom he has long loved, ſees himſelf disjoined from the only mind that has the ſame hopes, and fears, and intereſt; from the only companion with whom he has ſhared much good or evil; and with whom he could ſet his mind at liberty, to retrace the paſt, or anticipate the future. The continuity of being is lacerated; the ſettled courſe of ſentiment and action is ſtopped; and life ſtands ſuſpended and motionleſs, till it is driven by external cauſes into a new channel. But the time of ſuſpenſe is dreadful.

"Our firſt recourſe in this diſtreſſed ſolitude is, perhaps for want of habitual piety, to a gloomy acquieſcence in neceſſity. Of two mortal beings, one muſt loſe the other; but ſurely there is a higher and better comfort to be drawn from the conſideration of that Providence which watches over all, and a belief that the living and the dead are equally in the hands of God, who will reunite thoſe whom he has ſeparated, or who ſees that it is beſt not to reunite."

Johnſon

Johnſon himſelf was very much affected by the death of his mother, and ſent to Mr. Boſwell to come and aſſiſt him to compoſe his mind, which indeed was extremely agitated.—He lamented that all ſerious and religious converſation was baniſhed from the ſociety of men, though great advantages might be derived from it. All acknowledged, he ſaid, what hardly any body practiſed, the obligation we were under of making the concerns of eternity the governing principles of our lives. Every man, he obſerved, at laſt wiſhes for retreat: he ſees his expectations fruſtrated in the world, and begins to wean himſelf from it, and to prepare for everlaſting ſeparation.

Mr. B. one day mentioned to him, that he had ſeen the execution of ſeveral convicts at Tyburn, and that none of them ſeemed to be under any concern.—"Moſt of them, Sir (ſaid Johnſon), have never thought at all."—*B.* "But is not the fear of death natural to man?"—*J.* "So much ſo, Sir, that the whole of life is but keeping away the thoughts of it." He then, in a low and earneſt tone, talked of his meditating upon the awful hour of his own diſſolution, and in what manner he ſhould conduct himſelf upon that occaſion: "I know not (ſaid he) whether I ſhould wiſh to have a friend by me, or have it all between GOD and myſelf."

They afterward talked of the melancholy end of a gentleman who had deſtroyed himſelf.—Johnſon obſerved, "It was owing to imaginary difficulties in his affairs, which, had he talked with any friend, would ſoon have vaniſhed."—*B.* "Do you think, Sir, that all who commit ſuicide are mad?"—*J.* "Sir, they are often not univerſally diſordered in their intellects, but one paſſion preſſes ſo upon them, that they yield to it, and commit ſuicide, as a paſſionate man will ſtab another." He added, "I have often thought, that after a man has taken the reſolution to kill himſelf, it is not courage in him to do any thing, however deſperate, becauſe he has nothing to fear."—Goldſmith (who was in the room) ſaid, "I don't ſee that."—*J.* "Nay, why ſhould not you ſee what every one elſe ſees?"—*G.* "It is for fear of ſomething that he has reſolved to kill himſelf; and will not that timid diſpoſition reſtrain him?"—*J.* "It does not ſignify that the fear of ſomething made him reſolve; it is upon the ſtate of his mind after the reſolution is taken that I argue. Suppoſe a man, either from fear or pride, or conſcience, or whatever motive, has reſolved to kill himſelf, when once the reſolution is taken he has nothing to fear. He may then go and take the King of Pruſſia by the noſe, at the head of his army. He cannot fear the rack, who

who is reſolved to kill himſelf. When Euſtace Budgel was walking down to the Thames, determined to drown himſelf, he might, if he pleaſed, without any apprehenſion of danger, have turned aſide, and firſt ſet fire to St. James's palace."

The ſubject at another time turning on the belief in ghoſts, Johnſon ſaid, "Sir, I make a diſtinction between what a man may experience by the mere ſtrength of his imagination, and what imagination cannot poſſibly produce.—Thus, ſuppoſe I ſhould think that I ſaw a form and heard a voice cry, 'Johnſon, you are a very wicked fellow, and unleſs you repent you will certainly be puniſhed;' my own unworthineſs is ſo deeply impreſſed upon my mind, that I might *imagine* I thus ſaw and heard, and therefore I ſhould not believe that an external communication had been made to me. But if a form ſhould appear, and a voice ſhould tell me that a particular man had died at a particular place, and a particular hour, a fact which I had no apprehenſion of, nor any means of knowing, and this fact with all its circumſtances ſhould afterwards be unqueſtionably proved, I ſhould, in that caſe be perſuaded that I had ſupernatural intelligence imparted to me."

Mr. Boſwell gives us what he declares to be a true and fair ſtatement of Johnſon's way of

thinking upon the queſtion whether departed ſpirits are ever permitted to appear in this world, or in any way to operate upon human life. "He has (ſays Mr. B.) been ignorantly miſrepreſented as weakly credulous upon that ſubject; and, therefore, though I feel an inclination to diſdain and treat with ſilent contempt ſo fooliſh a notion concerning my illuſtrious friend, yet, as I find it has gained ground, it is neceſſary to refute it. The real fact then is, that Johnſon had a very philoſophical mind, and ſuch a rational reſpect for teſtimony, as to make him ſubmit his underſtanding to what was authentically proved, though he could not comprehend why it was ſo. Being thus diſpoſed, he was willing to inquire into the truth of any relation of ſupernatural agency, a general belief of which has prevailed in all nations and ages. But ſo far was he from being the dupe of implicit faith, that he examined the matter with a jealous attention, and no man was more ready to refute its falſhood when he had diſcovered it."

Of apparitions he once took occaſion to obſerve, "A total diſbelief of them is adverſe to the opinion of the exiſtence of the ſoul between death and the laſt day; the queſtion ſimply is, Whether departed ſpirits ever have the power of making themſelves perceptible to us? A man who

who thinks he has ſeen an apparition can only be convinced himſelf; his authority will not convince another; and his conviction, if rational, muſt be founded on being told ſomething which cannot be known but by ſupernatural means."

Johnſon mentioned a thing as not unfrequent, namely, the being *called*, that is, hearing one's name pronounced by the voice of a known perſon at a great diſtance, far beyond the poſſibility of being reached by any ſound uttered by human organs. "An acquaintance (ſays Mr. B.), on whoſe veracity I can depend, told me, that walking home one evening to Kilmarnock, he heard himſelf called from a wood, by the voice of a brother who had gone to America; and the next packet brought accounts of that brother's death." Mr. Macbean aſſerted, that this inexplicable calling was a thing very well known.—Dr. Johnſon ſaid, that one day at Oxford, as he was turning the key of his chamber, he heard his mother diſtinctly call *Sam*. She was then at Litchfield; but nothing confirmed.

Mr. Boſwell one day ſaid, "I do not know whether there are any well-atteſted ſtories of the appearance of ghoſts. You know there is a famous account of the apparition of Mrs. Veal, prefixed to 'Drelincourt on Death,"—Johnson.

"I believe, Sir, that is given up. I think the woman declared upon her death-bed that it was a lie."—*B.* "This objection is made againſt the truth of ghoſts appearing: that if they are in a ſtate of happineſs, it would be a puniſhment to them to return to this world; and if they are in a ſtate of miſery, it would be giving them a reſpite."—*J.* "Why, Sir, as the happineſs or miſery of unembodied ſpirits does not depend upon place, but is intellectual, we cannot ſay that they are leſs happy or leſs miſerable by appearing upon earth. It is wonderful, however, that five thouſand years have now elapſed ſince the creation of the world, and ſtill it is undecided whether or not there has been an inſtance of the ſpirit of any perſon appearing after death. All argument is againſt it; but all belief is for it."

On the ſubject of our ſituation in a future ſtate, he ſaid, "The happineſs of an unembodied ſpirit will conſiſt in a conſciouſneſs of the favour of GOD, in the contemplation of truth, and in the poſſeſſion of felicitating ideas." "But, Sir (ſaid Mr. Boſwell), is there any harm in our forming to ourſelves conjectures as to the particulars of our happineſs, though the ſcripture has ſaid but very little on the ſubject? 'We know not what we ſhall be."—*J.* "Sir, there is no harm. What philoſophy ſuggeſts

to

to us on this topic is probable. what ſcripture tells us is certain. Dr. Henry More has carried it as far as philoſophy can. You may buy both his theological and philoſophical works in two volumes folio, for about eight ſhillings."—*B.* "One of the moſt pleaſing thoughts is, that we ſhall ſee our friends again."—*J.* "Yes, Sir; but you muſt conſider, that when we are become purely rational, many of our friendſhips will be cut off. Many friendſhips are formed by a community of ſenſual pleaſures: all theſe will be cut off. We form many friendſhips with bad men, becauſe they have agreeable qualities, and they can be uſeful to us.—We form many friendſhips by miſtake, imagining people to be different from what they really are. After death, we ſhall ſee every one in a true light. Then, Sir, they talk of our meeting our relations: but then all relationſhip is diſſolved; and we ſhall have no regard for one perſon more than another, but for their real value. However, we ſhall have either the ſatisfaction of meeting our friends, or be ſatisfied without meeting them."—*B.* "Yet, Sir, we ſee in ſcripture, that Dives ſtill retained an anxious concern about his brethren."—*J.* "Why, Sir, we muſt either ſuppoſe that paſſage to be metaphorical, or hold with many divines, and all the Purgatorians, that departed ſouls do

do not all at once arrive at the utmoſt perfection of which they are capable."—*B.* "I think, Sir, that is a very rational ſuppoſition."—*J.* "Why yes, Sir; but we do not know it is a true one. There is no harm in believing it: but you muſt not compel others to make it an article of faith; for it is not revealed."—*B.* "Do you think, Sir, it is wrong in a man who holds the doctrine of purgatory to pray for the ſouls of his deceaſed friends?"—*J.* "Why no, Sir."—*B.* "I have been told, that in the Liturgy of the Epiſcopal Church of Scotland, there was a form of prayer for the dead."—*J.* "Sir, it is not in the Liturgy which Laud framed for the Epiſcopal Church of Scotland: if there is a Liturgy older than that, I ſhould be glad to ſee it."—*B.* "As to our employment in a future ſtate, the ſacred writings ſay little. The Revelation, however, of St. John gives us many ideas, and particularly mentions muſic."—*J.* "Why, Sir, ideas muſt be given you by means of ſomething which you know: and as to muſic, there are ſome philoſophers and divines who have maintained that we ſhall not be ſpiritualized to ſuch a degree, but that ſomething of matter, very much refined, will remain. In that caſe, muſic may make a part of our future felicity."

In another converſation, Mr. Boſwell mentioned a kind of religious Robinhood Society, which

which met every Sunday evening at Coach-maker's Hall for free debate; and that the ſubject for that night was the text which relates, with other miracles, that which happened at our SAVIOUR's death, 'And the graves were opened, and many bodies of the ſaints which ſlept aroſe, and came out of the graves after his reſurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.'—Mrs. Hall obſerved, that it was a very curious ſubject, and ſhe ſhould like to hear it diſcuſſed. Johnſon (ſomewhat warmly) ſaid, "One would not go to ſuch a place to hear it,—one would not be ſeen in ſuch a place —to give countenance to ſuch a meeting."—"But, Sir (ſaid ſhe to Johnſon), I ſhould like to hear *you* diſcuſs it." He ſeemed reluctant to engage in it. She talked of the reſurrection of the human race in general, and maintained that we ſhall be raiſed with the ſame bodies.—"Nay, Madam (returned Johnſon), we ſee that it is not to be the ſame body; for the Scripture uſes the illuſtration of grain ſown, and we know that the grain which grows is not the ſame with what is ſown. You cannot ſuppoſe that we ſhall riſe with a diſcaſed body; it is enough if there be ſuch a ſameneſs as to diſtinguiſh identity of perſon."

The Reader will, no doubt, be deſirous of learning how JOHNSON ſupported that awful criſis, of which he, through life, expreſſed ſo much dread. In

In his laſt illneſs, with that native fortitude which amidſt all his bodily diſtreſs and mental ſufferings never forſook him, he aſked Dr. Brockleſby, as a man in whom he had confidence, to tell him plainly whether he could recover. "Give me (ſaid he) a direct anſwer." The Doctor having firſt aſked him, if he could bear the whole truth, which way ſoever it might lead, and being anſwered that he could, declared that in his opinion he could not recover without a miracle. "Then (ſaid Johnſon) I will take no more phyſic, not even my opiates: for I have prayed that I may render up my ſoul to GOD unclouded." In this reſolution he perſevered; and at the ſame time uſed only the weakeſt kinds of ſuſtenance.

For ſome time before his death, all his fears were calmed and abſorbed by the prevalence of his faith, and his truſt in the merits and propitiation of our Redeemer. He talked often about the neceſſity of faith in the ſacrifice of the Redeemer, as neceſſary, beyond all good works whatever, for the ſalvation of mankind.

The Doctor, from the time that he was certain his death was near, appeared to be perfectly reſigned, was ſeldom or never fretful or out of temper, and often ſaid to his faithful ſervant, Francis Barber, who gave this account, "Attend, Francis, to the ſalvation of your ſoul, which

is the object of greateſt importance." He alſo explained to him paſſages in the Scripture, and ſeemed to have pleaſure in talking upon religious ſubjects.

On Monday, the thirteenth of December 1784, the day on which he died, a Miſs Morris, daughter to a particular friend of his, called, and ſaid to Francis, that ſhe begged to be permitted to ſee the Doctor, that ſhe might earneſtly requeſt him to give her his bleſſing. Francis went into the room, followed by the young lady, and delivered the meſſage. The Doctor turned himſelf in the bed, and ſaid,—"God bleſs you, my dear!" Theſe were the laſt words he ſpoke. His difficulty of breathing increaſed till about ſeven o'clock in the evening, when Francis and Mrs. Deſmoulins, who were ſitting in the room, obſerving that the noiſe he made in breathing had ceaſed, went to the bed ſide, and found that he was dead.

About two days after his death, the following account was communicated to Mr. Malone, in a letter by the Hon. John Byng:

"I HAVE had a long converſation with Cawſton, who ſat up with Dr. Johnſon, from nine o'clock on Sunday evening, till ten o'clock on Monday morning. And from what I can gather from him, it ſhould ſeem, that Dr. Johnſon was perfectly compoſed; ſteady in hope, and reſigned to death. At the interval of each hour, they aſſiſted him to ſit up in his bed, and move his legs, which were in much pain; when he regularly addreſſed himſelf to fervent prayer: and though ſometimes

times his voice failed him, his ſenſes never did during that time. The only ſuſtenance he received was cyder and water. He ſaid his mind was prepared, and the time to his diſſolution ſeemed long. At ſix in the morning he enquired the hour, and on being informed, ſaid, that all went on regularly, and he felt he had but a few hours to live.

"At ten o'clock in the morning, he parted from Cawſton, ſaying, 'You ſhould not detain Mr. Windham's ſervant,—I thank you: bear my remembrance to your maſter.' Cawſton ſays, that no man could appear more collected, more devout, or leſs terrified at the thoughts of the approaching minute."

RELIGION.

Mr. BOSWELL one day ſtated an anxious thought, by which a ſincere Chriſtian might be diſturbed, even when conſcious of having lived a good life, ſo far as conſiſtent with human infirmity; he might fear that he ſhould afterwards fall away, and be guilty of ſuch crimes as would render all his former religion vain. Could there be, he aſked, upon this awful ſubject, ſuch a thing as balancing of accounts? Suppoſe a man who has led a good life for ſeven years commits an act of wickedneſs, and inſtantly dies; will his former good life have any effect in his favour?—"Sir (ſaid Johnſon), if a man has led a good life for ſeven

years, and then is hurried by paſſion to do what is wrong, and is ſuddenly carried off, depend upon it he will have the reward of his ſeven years' good life; GOD will not take a catch of him. Upon this principle Richard Baxter believes that a ſuicide may be ſaved. If (ſaid he) it ſhould be objected, that what I maintain may encourage ſuicide, I anſwer, I am not to tell a lie to prevent it."—*B.* "But does not the text ſay, 'As the tree falls, ſo it muſt lie?'" *J.* "Yes, Sir; as the tree falls: but (after a little pauſe)—that is meant as to the general ſtate of the tree, not what is the effect of a ſudden blaſt." In ſhort (as Mr. B. obſerves), he interpreted the expreſſion as referring to condition, not to poſition. The common notion, therefore, ſeems to be erroneous; and Shenſtone's witty remark on Divines trying to give the tree a jerk upon a death-bed, to make it lie favourably, is not well-founded.

While Johnſon and Mr. Boſwell ſtood in calm conference by themſelves in a garden, at a pretty late hour, one ſerene autumn night, looking up to the heavens, the diſcourſe turned on the ſubject of a future ſtate.—"Sir (ſaid Johnſon), I do not imagine that all things will be made clear to us immediately after death; but that the ways of Providence will be explained to us very gradually." Mr. B. aſked, whether,

whether, although the words of ſome texts of Scripture ſeemed ſtrong in ſupport of the dreadful doctrine of an eternity of puniſhment, we might not hope that the denunciation was figurative, and would not literally be executed.—Johnſon replied, "Sir, you are to conſider the intention of puniſhment in a future ſtate. We have no reaſon to be ſure that we ſhall then be no longer liable to offend againſt GOD. We do not know that even the angels are quite in a ſtate of ſecurity; nay, we know that ſome of them have fallen. It may, therefore, perhaps be neceſſary, in order to preſerve both men and angels in a ſtate of rectitude, that they ſhould have continually before them the puniſhment of thoſe who have deviated from it; but we may hope, that by ſome other means a fall from rectitude may be prevented. Some of the texts of Scripture upon this ſubject are, as you obſerve, indeed ſtrong; but they may admit of a mitigated interpretation." He talked upon this aweful and delicate queſtion in a gentle tone, and as if afraid to be deciſive.

At another time, ſpeaking of the *inward light* to which ſome methodiſts pretended, he ſaid, it was a principle utterly incompatible with ſocial or civil ſecurity. "If a man (ſaid he) pretends to a principle of action of which I can know nothing, nay, not ſo much as that

he has it, but only that he pretends to it; how can I tell what that perſon may be prompted to do? When a perſon profeſſes to be governed by a written aſcertained law, I can then know where to find him."

Mrs. Knowles once mentioned, as a proſelyte to Quakeriſm, Miſs ——, a young lady well known to Dr. Johnſon, for whom he had ſhewn much affection; while ſhe ever had, and ſtill retained, a great reſpect for him. Mrs. Knowles at the ſame time took an opportunity of letting him know, "that the amiable young creature was ſorry at finding that he was offended at her leaving the church of England, and embracing a ſimpler faith;" and, in the gentleſt and moſt perſuaſive manner, ſolicited his kind indulgence for what was ſincerely a matter of conſcience. Johnſon ſaid (frowning very angrily), "Madam, ſhe is an odious wench. She could not have any proper conviction that it was her duty to change her religion, which is the moſt important of all ſubjects, and ſhould be ſtudied with all care, and with all the helps we can get. She knew no more of the Church which ſhe left, and that which ſhe embraced, than ſhe did of the difference between the Copernican and Ptolemaick ſyſtems."—MRS. KNOWLES. "She had the New Teſtament before her."—JOHN-

SON. "Madam, ſhe could not underſtand the New Teſtament, the moſt difficult book in the world, for which the ſtudy of a life is required."—MRS. K. "It is clear as to eſſentials."—*J.* "But not as to controverſial points. The heathens were eaſily converted, becauſe they had nothing to give up; but we ought not, without very ſtrong conviction indeed, to deſert the religion in which we have been educated. That is the religion given you, the religion in which it may be ſaid Providence has placed you. If you live conſcientiouſly in that religion, you may be ſafe; but error is dangerous indeed, if you err when you chooſe a religion for yourſelf."—MRS. K. "Muſt we then go by implicit faith?"—*J.* "Why, Madam, the greateſt part of our knowledge is implicit faith; and as to religion, have we heard all that a diſciple of Confucius, all that a Mahometan can ſay for himſelf?" He then roſe again into paſſion, and attacked the young proſelyte in the ſevereſt terms of reproach. Mr. Boſwell obſerved, that the eſſential part of religion was piety, a devout intercourſe with the Divinity; and that many a man was a quaker without knowing it.

A Quaker having objected to the "obſervance of days, and months, and years," Johnſon anſwered, "The Church does not ſuperſtitiouſly

ſtitiouſly obſerve days, merely as days, but as memorials of important facts. Chriſtmas might be kept as well upon one day of the year as another; but there ſhould be a ſtated day for commemorating the birth of our Saviour, becauſe there is danger that what may be done on any day will be neglected."

In a party one day, conſiſting only of Mr. Seward, Mr. Boſwell, and the Doctor, Horace having been mentioned, Mr. Boſwell ſaid, "There is a great deal of thinking in his works. One finds there almoſt every thing but religion."—SEWARD. "He ſpeaks of his returning to it in his Ode *Parcus Deorum cultor et infrequens.*"—JOHNSON. "Sir, he was not in earneſt; this was merely poetical."—BOSWELL. "There are, I am afraid, many people who have no religion at all."—*S.* "And ſenſible people too."—*J.* "Why, Sir, not ſenſible in that reſpect. There muſt be either a natural or moral ſtupidity, if one lives in a total neglect of ſo very important a concern."—*S.* "I wonder that there ſhould be people without religion."—*J.* "Sir, you need not wonder at this, when you conſider how large a proportion of almoſt every man's life is paſſed without thinking of it. I myſelf was for ſome years totally regardleſs of religion; it had dropped out of my mind. It was at an early

part of my life. Sickneſs brought it back, and I hope I have never loſt it ſince."—*B.* "My dear Sir, what a man muſt you have been without religion! Why you muſt have gone on drinking, and ſwearing, and —." *J.* (with a ſmile) "I drank enough and ſwore enough, to be ſure."—*S.* "One ſhould think that ſickneſs, and the view of death, would make more men religious."—*J.* "Sir, they do not know how to go about it; they have not the firſt notion. A man who has never had religion before, no more grows religious when he is ſick, than a man who has never learnt figures can count when he has need of calculation."

A gentleman was mentioned as being too ready to introduce religious diſcourſe upon all occaſions. Johnſon obſerved, "Why yes, Sir, he will introduce religious diſcourſe without ſeeing whether it will end in inſtruction and improvement, or produce ſome prophane jeſt. He would introduce it in the company of ******, and twenty more ſuch."

Mr. Boſwell mentioned the Doctor's excellent diſtinction between liberty of conſcience and liberty of teaching *. Johnſon ſaid, "Conſider, Sir; if you have children whom you wiſh to educate in the principles of the church of England, and there comes a Quaker

* Ante, Page 216.

who

who tries to pervert them to his principles, you would drive away the Quaker. You would not truſt to the predomination of right, which you believe is in your opinions; you would keep wrong out of their heads. Now the vulgar are the children of the State. If any one attempts to teach them doctrines contrary to what the State approves, the magiſtrate may and ought to reſtrain him."—*S.* "Would you reſtrain private converſation, Sir?"—*J.* "Why, Sir, it is difficult to ſay where private converſation begins, and where it ends. If we three ſhould diſcuſs even the great queſtion concerning the exiſtence of a Supreme Being by ourſelves, we ſhould not be reſtrained; for that would be to put an end to all improvement; but if we ſhould diſcuſs it in the preſence of ten boarding-ſchool girls, and as many boys, I think the magiſtrate would do well to put us in the ſtocks, to finiſh the debate there."

A gentleman once expreſſed a wiſh to go and live three years at Otaheite or New Zealand, in order to obtain a full acquaintance with people ſo totally different from all that we have ever known, and be ſatisfied what pure nature can do for man.—JOHNSON. "What could you learn, Sir? What can ſavages tell, but what they themſelves have ſeen? Of the

paſt, or the inviſible, they can tell nothing. The inhabitants of Otaheite and New Zealand are not in a ſtate of pure nature; for it is plain they broke off from ſome other people. Had they grown out of the ground, you might have judged of a ſtate of pure nature. Fanciful people may talk of a mythology being amongſt them, but it muſt be invention. They have once had religion, which has been gradually debaſed; and what account of their religion can you ſuppoſe to be learnt from ſavages? Only conſider, Sir, our own ſtate: our religion is in a book; we have an order of men whoſe duty it is to teach it; we have one day in the week ſet apart for it, and this is in general pretty well obſerved; yet aſk the firſt ten groſs men you meet, and hear what they can tell of their religion."

Mr. Murray one day praiſed the ancient philoſophers for the candour and good humour with which thoſe of different ſects diſputed with each other. "Sir (ſaid Johnſon) they diſputed with good humour, becauſe they were not in earneſt as to religion. Had the ancients been ſerious in their belief, we ſhould not have had their Gods exhibited in the manner we find them repreſented in the Poets. The people would not have ſuffered it. They diſputed with good humour upon their fanciful theories,

theories, becauſe they were not intereſted in the truth of them; when a man has nothing to loſe, he may be in good humour with his opponent. Accordingly, you ſee in Lucian that the Epicurean, who argues only negatively, keeps his temper; the Stoick, who has ſomething poſitive to preſerve, grows angry. Being angry with one who controverts an opinion which you value, is a neceſſary conſequence of the uneaſineſs which you feel. Every man who attacks my belief diminiſhes in ſome degree my confidence in it, and therefore makes me uneaſy; and I am angry with him who makes me uneaſy. Thoſe only who believed in revelation have been angry at having their faith called in queſtion, becauſe they only had ſomething upon which they could reſt as matter of fact." Mr. MURRAY. "It ſeems to me that we are not angry at a man for controverting an opinion which we believe and value; we rather pity him,"—JOHNSON. "Why, Sir; to be ſure when you wiſh a man to have that belief which you think is of infinite advantage, you wiſh well to him; but your primary conſideration is your own quiet. If a madman were to come into this room with a ſtick in his hand, no doubt we ſhould pity the ſtate of his mind; but our primary conſideration would be to take care of ourſelves. We ſhould knock

him down firſt, and pity him afterwards. No, Sir; every man will diſpute with great good humour upon a ſubject in which he is not intereſted. I will diſpute very calmly upon the probability of another man's ſon being hanged; but if a man zealouſly enforces the probability that my own ſon will be hanged, I ſhall certainly not be in a very good humour with him." Mr. Boſwell added this illuſtration, "If a man endeavours to convince me that my wife, whom I love very much, and in whom I place great confidence, is a diſagreeable woman, and is even unfaithful to me, I ſhall be very angry, for he is putting me in fear of being unhappy." —MURRAY. "But, Sir, truth will always bear an examination."—JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, but it is painful to be forced to defend it. Conſider, Sir, how ſhould you like, though conſcious of your innocence, to be tried before a jury for a capital crime, once a week."

Talking of devotion, he ſaid, "Though it be true that 'God dwelleth not in temples made with hands,' yet in this ſtate of being, our minds are more piouſly affected in places appropriated to divine worſhip, than in others. Some people have a particular room in their houſe where they ſay their prayers; of this I do not diſapprove, as it may animate their devotion."

He

He ſaid alſo, " that to find a ſubſtitution for violated morality was the leading feature in all perverſions of religion."

A ſectary being mentioned, who was a very religious man, and not only attended regularly on public worſhip with thoſe of his communion, but made a particular ſtudy of the Scriptures, and even wrote a commentary on ſome parts of them, yet was known to be very licentious in indulging himſelf with women; maintaining that men are to be ſaved by faith alone, and that the Chriſtian religion had not preſcribed any fixed rule for the intercourſe between the ſexes;" Johnſon ſaid, " Sir, there is no truſting to that crazy piety."

At another time he ſaid, " The morality of an action depends on the motive from which we act. If I fling half a crown to a beggar with intention to break his head, and he picks it up and buys victuals with it, the phyſical effect is good; but with reſpect to me the action is very wrong. So religious exerciſes, if not performed with an intention to pleaſe God, avail us nothing. As our Saviour ſays of thoſe who perform them from other motives, ' Verily they have their reward."

A queſtion being introduced as having been much agitated in the Church of Scotland, whether the claim of lay-patrons to preſent miniſters

miniſters to pariſhes be well founded; and ſuppoſing it to be well founded, whether it ought to be exerciſed without the concurrence of the people? Johnſon ſaid, the ſubject was well treated in the 'Defence of Pluralities;' and although he thought that a patron ſhould exerciſe his right with tenderneſs to the inclinations of the people of a pariſh, he was very clear as to his right. He then proceeded to dictate an argument at large on the ſubject, as ſuppoſing the queſtion to be agitated before the general aſſembly.

On another occaſion Mr. Boſwell introduced a common ſubject of complaint, the very ſmall ſalaries which many curates have, and maintained, "that no man ſhould be inveſted with the character of a clergyman, unleſs he has a ſecurity for ſuch an income as will enable him to appear reſpectable; that therefore a clergyman ſhould not be allowed to have a curate, unleſs he gives him a hundred pounds a year; if he cannot do that, let him perform the duty himſelf."—Johnſon obſerved, "To be ſure, Sir, it is wrong that any clergyman ſhould be without a reaſonable income; but as the church revenues were ſadly diminiſhed at the Reformation, the clergy who have livings cannot afford, in many inſtances, to give good ſalaries to curates, without leaving

ing themſelves too little; and if no curate were to be permitted, unleſs he had a hundred pounds a year, their number would be very ſmall, which would be a diſadvantage, as then there would be no ſuch choice in the nurſery for the church, curates being candidates for the higher eccleſiaſtical offices, according to their merit and good behaviour." He explained the ſyſtem of the Engliſh Hierarchy exceedingly well. "It is not thought fit (ſaid he) to truſt a man with the care of a pariſh, till he has given proof as a curate that he ſhall deſerve ſuch a truſt." This is an excellent *theory*; and if the *practice* were according to it, the Church of England would be admirable indeed. However, as Dr. Johnſon once obſerved as to the Univerſities, bad practice does not infer that the *conſtitution* is bad.

The ſubject of the inequality of the livings of the clergy of England, and the ſcanty proviſions of ſome of the curates was reſumed at another time, when Johnſon ſaid, "It cannot be helped. You muſt conſider, that the revenues of the clergy are not at the diſpoſal of the State, like the pay of the army. Different men have founded different churches; and ſome are better endowed, ſome worſe. The State cannot interfere and make an equal diviſion of what has been particularly appropriated.

ated. Now when a clergyman has but a ſmall living, or even two ſmall livings, he can afford very little to a curate."

Johnſon's old fellow-collegian Mr. Edwards, who has been mentioned before, once expreſſed a wiſh that he had continued at college. Johnſon aſked, "Why do you wiſh that, Sir?" EDWARDS. "Becauſe I think I ſhould have had a much eaſier life than mine has been. I ſhould have been a parſon, and had a good living, like Bloxam and ſeveral others, and lived comfortably."—JOHNSON. "Sir, the life of a parſon, of a conſcientious clergyman, is not eaſy. I have always conſidered a clergyman as the father of a larger family than he is able to maintain. I would rather have Chancery ſuits upon my hands than the cure of ſouls. No, Sir, I do not envy a clergyman's life as an eaſy life, nor do I envy the clergyman who makes it an eaſy life."

In one of his Journals was found the following ſcheme of life for Sunday: "Having lived (as he with tenderneſs of conſcience expreſſes himſelf) not without an habitual reverence for the Sabbath, yet without that attention to its religious duties which Chriſtianity requires;

"To riſe early, and in order to it, to go to ſleep early on Saturday.

2. "To

2. "To uſe ſome extraordinary devotion in the morning.

3. "To examine the tenour of my life, and particularly the laſt week; and to mark my advances in religion, or receſſion from it.

4. "To read the Scripture methodically with ſuch helps as are at hand.

5. "To go to church twice.

6. "To read books of Divinity, either ſpeculative or practical.

7. "To inſtruct my family.

8. "To wear off by meditation any worldly ſoil contracted in the week."

From another of his Journals was tranſcribed what follows:

"At church, Oct.—65.

"To avoid all ſingularity.

"To come in before ſervice, and compoſe my mind by meditation, or by reading ſome portions of ſcripture.

"If I can hear the ſermon to attend to it, unleſs attention be more troubleſome than uſeful.

"To conſider the act of prayer as a repoſal of myſelf upon God, and a reſignation of all into his holy hand."

He ſaid he would not have Sunday kept with rigid ſeverity and gloom, but with a gravity and ſimplicity of behaviour.

Johnſon and Mr. Boſwell were once at Southill church together, and it being the firſt Sunday of the month, and the holy ſacrament adminiſtered, Mr. B. ſtaid to partake of it. When he came afterwards into Dr. Johnſon's room, the Doctor ſaid, "You did right to

ſtay

ſtay and receive the communion; I had not thought of it." This ſeemed to imply that he did not chooſe to approach the altar without a previous preparation; as to which good men entertain different opinions, ſome holding that it is irreverent to partake of that ordinance without conſiderable premeditation; others, that whoever is a ſincere chriſtian, and in a proper frame of mind to diſcharge any other ritual duty of our religion, may without ſcruple diſcharge this moſt ſolemn one. A middle notion Mr. Boſwell ſeems to believe to be the juſt one, which is, that communicants need not think a long train of preparatory forms indiſpenſably neceſſary; but neither ſhould they raſhly and lightly venture upon ſo awful and myſterious an inſtitution. Chriſtians muſt judge each for himſelf, what degree of retirement and ſelf-examination is neceſſary upon each occaſion.

Being once (ſays Mr. B.) in a frame of mind which, I hope for the felicity of human nature, many experience—in fine weather,—at the country-houſe of a friend,—conſoled and elevated by pious exerciſes, I expreſſed myſelf with an unreſtrained fervour to my 'Guide, Philoſopher, and Friend.' "My dear Sir, I would fain be a good man; and I am very good now. I fear God and honour the King, I wiſh

wiſh to do no ill, and to be benevolent to all mankind." He looked at me with a benignant indulgence; but took occaſion to give me wiſe and ſalutary caution. "Do not, Sir, accuſtom yourſelf to truſt to *impreſſions*. There is a middle ſtate of mind between conviction and hypocriſy, of which many are conſcious. By truſting to impreſſions, a man may gradually come to yield to them, and at length be ſubject to them, ſo as not to be a free agent. A man who is in that ſtate ſhould not be ſuffered to live; if he declares he cannot help acting in a particular way, and is irreſiſtibly impelled, there can be no confidence in him, no more than in a tyger. But, Sir, no man believes himſelf to be impelled irreſiſtibly; we know that he who ſays he believes it, lies. Favourable impreſſions at particular moments, as to the ſtate of our ſouls, may be deceitful and dangerous. In general no man can be ſure of his acceptance with God; ſome, indeed, may have had it revealed to them. St. Paul, who wrought miracles, may have had a miracle wrought on himſelf, and may have obtained ſupernatural aſſurance of pardon, and mercy, and beatitude; yet St. Paul, though he expreſſes ſtrong hope, alſo expreſſes fear, leſt having preached to others, he himſelf ſhould be a caſt-away."

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The opinion of a learned Biſhop, as to there being merit in religious faith, being mentioned, Johnſon ſaid, "Why yes, Sir, the moſt licentious man, were hell open before him, would not take the moſt beautiful ſtrumpet to his arms. We muſt, as the Apoſtle ſays, live by faith, not by ſight."

Mr. Boſwell talking of original ſin in conſequence of the fall of man, and of the atonement made by our Saviour, "With reſpect to original ſin (ſaid Johnſon), the enquiry is not neceſſary; for whatever is the cauſe of human corruption, men are evidently and confeſſedly ſo corrupt, that all the laws of heaven and earth are inſufficient to reſtrain them from crimes.

"Whatever difficulty there may be in the conception of vicarious puniſhments, it is an opinion which has had poſſeſſion of mankind in all ages. There is no nation that has not uſed the practice of ſacrifices. Whoever, therefore, denies the propriety of vicarious puniſhments, holds an opinion which the ſentiments and practice of mankind have contradicted from the beginning of the world. The great ſacrifice for the ſins of mankind was offered at the death of the MESSIAH, who is called in ſcripture, 'The Lamb of God, that taketh away the ſins of the world.' To judge of

of the reaſonableneſs of the ſcheme of redemption, it muſt be conſidered as neceſſary to the government of the Univerſe, that God ſhould make known his perpetual and irreconcileable deteſtation of moral evil. He might indeed puniſh, and puniſh only the offenders; but as the end of puniſhment is not revenge of crimes, but propagation of virtue, it was more becoming the Divine clemency to find another manner of proceeding, leſs deſtructive to man, and at leaſt equally powerful to promote goodneſs. The end of puniſhment is, to reclaim and warn. *That* puniſhment will both reclaim and warn, which ſhews evidently ſuch abhorrence of ſin in God, as may deter us from it, or ſtrike us with dread of vengeance when we have committed it: this is effected by vicarious puniſhment. Nothing could more teſtify the oppoſition between the nature of God and moral evil, or more amply diſplay his juſtice to men and angels, to all orders and ſucceſſions of beings, than that it was neceſſary for the higheſt and pureſt nature, even for Divinity itſelf, to pacify the demands of vengeance, by a painful death; of which the natural effect will be, that when juſtice is appeaſed, there is a proper place for the exerciſe of mercy; and that ſuch propitiation ſhall ſupply, in ſome degree, the imperfections of our obedience,

and the efficacy of our repentance; for obedience and repentance, ſuch as we can perform, are ſtill neceſſary. Our Saviour has told us, that he did not come to deſtroy the law, but to fulfil: to fulfil the typical law, by the performance of what thoſe types had foreſhewn; and the moral law, by precepts of greater purity and higher exaltation.

"The peculiar doctrine of Chriſtianity is that of an univerſal ſacrifice, and perpetual propitiation. Other prophets only proclaimed the will and the threatenings of God. Chriſt ſatisfied his juſtice *."

He ſaid at another time, that the holidays obſerved by our church were of great uſe in religion.

It was told Johnſon, that Goldſmith had ſaid that he had come too late into the world, for that Pope and other poets had taken up the places in the Temple of Fame; ſo that as but

* Dr. Ogden, in his ſecond Sermon 'On the Articles of the Chriſtian Faith,' with admirable acuteneſs thus addreſſes the oppoſers of that Doctrine, which accounts for the confuſion, ſin, and miſery, which we find in this life: "It would be ſevere in God, you think, to *degrade* us to ſuch a ſad ſtate as this, for the offence of our firſt parents; but you can allow him to *place* us in it without any inducement. Are our calamities leſſened for not being aſcribed to Adam? If your condition be unhappy, is it not ſtill unhappy, whatever was the occaſion? with the aggravation of this reflection, that if it was as good as it was at firſt deſigned, there ſeems to be ſomewhat the leſs reaſon to look for its amendment."

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a few at any period could poſſeſs poetical reputation, a man of genius could now hardly acquire it. "That (ſaid Johnſon) is one of the moſt ſenſible things I have ever heard of Goldſmith. It is difficult to get literary fame, and it is every day growing more difficult. Ah, Sir, that ſhould make a man think of ſecuring happineſs in another world, which all who try ſincerely for it may attain. In compariſon of that, how little are all other things! The belief of immortality is impreſſed upon all men, and all men act under an impreſſion of it, however they may talk, and though perhaps they may be ſcarcely ſenſible of it."

When Johnſon paid a viſit at Oxford, he ſurprized the company not a little, by acknowledging, with a look of horror, that he was much oppreſſed by the fear of death. The amiable Dr. Adams ſuggeſted that God was infinitely good.—JOHNSON. "That he is infinitely good, as far as the perfection of his nature will allow, I certainly believe; but it is neceſſary for good upon the whole, that individuals ſhould be puniſhed. As to an *individual* therefore he is not infinitely good; and as I cannot be *ſure* that I have fulfilled the conditions on which ſalvation is granted, I am afraid I may be one of thoſe who ſhall be damned."—DR. ADAMS. "What do you mean by

damned?"—*J.* (paſſionately and loudly) "Sent to Hell, Sir, and puniſhed everlaſtingly."—Dr. *A.* "I don't believe that doctrine."—*J.* "Hold, Sir; do you believe that ſome will be puniſhed at all?"—Dr. *A.* "Being excluded from Heaven will be a puniſhment; yet there may be no great poſitive ſuffering."—*J.* "Well, Sir; but if you admit any degree of puniſhment, there is an end of your argument for infinite goodneſs ſimply conſidered; for infinite goodneſs would inflict no puniſhment whatever. There is not infinite goodneſs phyſically conſidered; morally there is."—BOSWELL. "But may not a man attain to ſuch a degree of hope as not to be uneaſy from the fear of death?"—*J.* "A man may have ſuch a degree of hope as to keep him quiet. You ſee I am not quiet, from the vehemence with which I talk; but I do not deſpair."—MRS. ADAMS. "You ſeem, Sir, to forget the merits of our Redeemer."—*J.* "Madam, I do not forget the merits of my Redeemer; but my Redeemer has ſaid, that he will ſet ſome on his right hand and ſome on his left." He was in gloomy agitation, and ſaid, "I'll have no more on't." If what has now been ſtated ſhould be urged by the enemies of Chriſtianity, as if its influence on the mind were not benignant, let it be remembered, that

Johnſon's

Johnſon's temperament was melancholy, of which ſuch direful apprehenſions of futurity are often a common effect. When he approached nearer to his awful change, we have ſeen that his mind became tranquil, and he exhibited as much fortitude as becomes a thinking man in that ſituation.

From the ſubject of death they paſſed to diſcourſe of life, whether it was upon the whole more happy or miſerable. Johnſon was decidedly for the balance of miſery.

They then talked of the recent expulſion of ſix ſtudents from the Univerſity at Oxford, who were methodiſts, and would not deſiſt from publickly praying and exhorting. Johnſon ſaid, "Sir, that expulſion was extremely juſt and proper. What have they to do at an Univerſity who are not willing to be taught, but will preſume to teach? Where is religion to be learnt but at an Univerſity? Sir, they were examined, and found to be mighty ignorant fellows."—BOSWELL. "But was it not hard, Sir, to expel them, for I am told they were good beings?"—JOHNSON. "Sir, I believe they might be good beings; but they were not fit to be in the Univerſity of Oxford. A cow is a very good animal in the field; but we turn her out of a garden." This was an uncommonly happy illuſtration.

Of preaching, and of the great ſucceſs which thoſe called Methodiſts have, Johnſon ſaid, "It is owing to their expreſſing themſelves in a plain and familiar manner, which is the only way to do good to the common people, and which clergymen of genius and learning ought to do from a principle of duty, when it is ſuited to their congregations; a practice for which they will be praiſed by men of ſenſe. To inſiſt againſt drunkenneſs as a crime, becauſe it debaſes Reaſon, the nobleſt faculty of man, would be of no ſervice to the common people; but to tell them that they may die in a fit of drunkenneſs, and ſhew them how dreadful that would be, cannot fail to make a deep impreſſion. When the Scotch clergy ſhall give up their homely manner, religion will ſoon decay in that country."

He at another time repeated, that the eſtabliſhed Clergy in general did not preach plain enough; and that poliſhed periods and glittering ſentences flew over the heads of the common people, without any impreſſion upon their hearts. Something might be neceſſary, he obſerved, to excite the affections of the common people, who were ſunk in languor and lethargy, and therefore he ſuppoſed that the new concomitants of methodiſm might probably produce ſo deſirable an effect. The mind,

like the body, he obſerved, delighted in change and novelty, and even in religion itſelf courted new appearances and modifications. Whatever might be thought of ſome methodiſt teachers, he ſaid, he could ſcarcely doubt the ſincerity of that man who travelled nine hundred miles in a month, and preached twelve times a week; for no adequate reward, merely temporal, could be given for ſuch indefatigable labour.

Mr. Boſwell once told him, that having objected to keeping company with a notorious infidel, a friend of his ſaid to him, "I do not think that men who live laxly in the world, as you and I do, can with propriety aſſume ſuch an authority. Dr. Johnſon may, who is uniformly exemplary in his conduct. But it is not very conſiſtent to ſhun an infidel to-day, and get drunk to morrow."—JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, this is ſad reaſoning. Becauſe a man cannot be right in all things, is he to be right in nothing? Becauſe a man ſometimes gets drunk, is he therefore to ſteal? This doctrine would very ſoon bring a man to the gallows."

After all, however, Mr. Boſwell ſeems to think it a difficult queſtion how far ſincere Chriſtians ſhould aſſociate with the avowed enemies of religion; for, in the firſt place, almoſt every man's mind may be more or leſs 'corrupted by evil communications;' ſecondly, the world may very

naturally ſuppoſe that they are not really in earneſt in religion, who can eaſily bear its opponents; and thirdly, if the profane find themſelves quite well received by the pious, one of the checks upon an open declaration of their infidelity, and one of the probable chances of obliging them ſeriouſly to reflect, which their being ſhunned would do, is removed.

A gentleman one day ſaid, that in his opinion the character of an infidel was more deteſtable than that of a man notoriouſly guilty of an atrocious crime. Another differed from him, becauſe we are ſurer of the odiouſneſs of the one, than of the error of the other.—JOHNSON. "Sir, I agree with him; for the infidel would be guilty of any crime, if he were inclined to it."—A general Officer aſked him, what he thought of the ſpirit of infidelity, which was ſo prevalent.—*J.* "Sir, this gloom of infidelity, I hope, is only a tranſient cloud paſſing through the hemiſphere, which will ſoon be diſſipated, and the ſun break forth with his uſual ſplendour."—"You think then (ſaid the General) that they will change their principles like their clothes."—*J.* "Why, Sir, if they beſtow no more thought on principles than on dreſs, it muſt be ſo." The General ſaid, that "a great part of the faſhionable infidelity was owing to a deſire of ſhewing courage. Men who have no oppor-

opportunity of ſhewing it as to things in this life, take death and futurity as objects on which to diſplay it."—*J.* "That is mighty fooliſh affectation. Fear is one of the paſſions of human nature, of which it is impoſſible to diveſt it."

Mr. B. mentioned to Dr. Johnſon, that David Hume's perſiſting in his infidelity when he was dying ſhocked him much.—JOHNSON. "Why ſhould it ſhock you, Sir? Hume owned he had never read the New Teſtament with attention. Here then was a man who had been at no pains to inquire into the truth of religion, and had continually turned his mind the other way. It was not to be expected that the proſpect of death would alter his way of thinking, unleſs God ſhould ſend an angel to ſet him right."—Mr. B. ſaid, he had reaſon to believe that the thought of annihilation gave Hume no pain.—*J.* "It was not ſo, Sir. He had a vanity in being thought eaſy. It is more probable that he ſhould aſſume an appearance of eaſe, than that ſo very improbable a thing ſhould be, as a man not afraid of going (as, in ſpite of his deluſive theory, he cannot be ſure but he may go) into an unknown ſtate, and not being uneaſy at leaving all he knew. And you are to conſider, that upon his own principle of annihilation he had no motive to ſpeak the truth."

At another time Mr. B. expreſſed a wiſh to have the arguments for Chriſtianity always in readineſs, that his religious faith might be as firm and clear as any propoſition whatever, ſo that he need not be under the leaſt uneaſineſs when it ſhould be attacked. Johnſon ſaid, "Sir, you cannot anſwer all objections. You have demonſtration for a Firſt Cauſe: you ſee he muſt be good as well as powerful, becauſe there is nothing to make him otherwiſe, and goodneſs of itſelf is preferable. Yet you have againſt this, what is very certain, the unhappineſs of human life. This, however, gives us reaſon to hope for a future ſtate of compenſation, that there may be a perfect ſyſtem. But of that we were not ſure till we had a poſitive revelation." —"I told him (adds Mr. B.) that his 'Raſſelas' had often made me unhappy; for it repreſented the miſery of human life ſo well, and ſo convincingly to a thinking mind, that if at any time the impreſſion wore off, and I felt myſelf eaſy, I began to ſuſpect ſome deluſion."

His profound adoration of the Great Firſt Cauſe was ſuch as to ſet him above that "Philoſophy and vain deceit," with which men of narrower conceptions have been infected. He uſed ſtrongly to maintain, that "what is right is not ſo from any natural fitneſs, but becauſe God wills it to be right."

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Of a gentleman who was mentioned, he ſaid, "I have not met with any man for a long time who has given me ſuch general diſpleaſure. He is totally unfixed in his principles, and wants to puzzle other people."—Mr. B. ſaid, his principles had been poiſoned by a noted infidel writer; but that he was, nevertheleſs, a benevolent good man.—JOHNSON. "We can have no dependance upon that inſtinctive, that conſtitutional goodneſs which is not founded upon principle. I grant you that ſuch a man may be a very amiable member of ſociety. I can conceive him placed in ſuch a ſituation, that he is not much tempted to deviate from what is right; and as every man prefers virtue, when there is not ſome ſtrong incitement to tranſgreſs its precepts, I can conceive him doing nothing wrong. But if ſuch a man ſtood in need of money, I ſhould not like to truſt him; and I ſhould certainly not truſt him with young ladies, for *there* there is always temptation. Hume and other ſceptical innovators are vain men, and will gratify themſelves at any expence. Truth will not afford ſufficient food to their vanity; ſo they have betaken themſelves to error. Truth, Sir, is a cow which will yield ſuch people no more milk, and ſo they are gone to milk the bull. If I could have allowed myſelf to gratify my vanity at the expence

pence of truth, what fame might I have acquired. Every thing which Hume has advanced againſt Chriſtianity had paſſed through my mind long before he wrote. Always remember this, that after a ſyſtem is well ſettled upon poſitive evidence, a few partial objections ought not to ſhake it. The human mind is ſo limited that it cannot take in all the parts of a ſubject, ſo that there may be objections raiſed againſt any thing. There are objections againſt a *plenum*, and objections againſt a *vacuum*; yet one of them muſt certainly be true."

Hume's argument againſt the belief of miracles being mentioned, 'that it is more probable the witneſſes to the truth of them are miſtaken, or ſpeak falſely, than that the miracles ſhould be true,' Johnſon ſaid, "Why, Sir, the great difficulty of proving miracles ſhould make us very cautious in believing them. But let us conſider; although God has made Nature to operate by certain fixed laws, yet it is not unreaſonable to think that he may ſuſpend thoſe laws, in order to eſtabliſh a ſyſtem highly advantageous to mankind. Now the Chriſtian religion is a moſt beneficial ſyſtem, as it gives us light and certainty where we were before in darkneſs and doubt. The miracles which prove it are atteſted by men who had no intereſt in deceiving us; but who, on the contrary, were

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told that they ſhould ſuffer perſecution, and did actually lay down their lives in confirmation of the truth of the facts which they aſſerted. Indeed, for ſome centuries the heathens did not pretend to deny the miracles; but ſaid they were performed by the aid of evil ſpirits. This is a circumſtance of great weight. Then, Sir, when we take the proofs derived from prophecies which have been ſo exactly fulfilled, we have moſt ſatisfactory evidence. Suppoſing a miracle poſſible, as to which, in my opinion, there can be no doubt, we have as ſtrong evidence for the miracles in ſupport of Chriſtianity, as the nature of the thing admits."

Talking of thoſe who denied the truth of Chriſtianity, he ſaid, "It is always eaſy to be on the negative ſide. If a man were now to deny that there is ſalt upon the table, you could not reduce him to an abſurdity. Come, let us try this a little further. I deny that Canada is taken, and I can ſupport my denial by pretty good arguments. The French are a much more numerous people than we; and it is not likely that they would allow us to take it.—'But the miniſtry have aſſured us, in all the formality of the Gazette, that it is taken.'—Very true. But the miniſtry have put us to an enormous expence by the war in America, and it is their intereſt to perſuade us that we have got ſomething

ſomething for our money.—'But the fact is confirmed by thouſands of men who were at the taking of it.'—Ay, but theſe men have ſtill more intereſt in deceiving us. They don't want you ſhould think the French have beat them, but that they have beat the French.—Now ſuppoſe you ſhould go over and find that it is really taken, that would only ſatisfy yourſelf; for when you come home we will not believe you. We will ſay you have been bribed. Yet, Sir, notwithſtanding all theſe plauſible objections, we have no doubt that Canada is really ours. Such is the weight of common teſtimony. How much ſtronger are the evidences of the Chriſtian relgion?"

Mr. B. once acknowledged to Johnſon, that though educated very ſtrictly in the principles of religion, he had for ſome time been miſled into a certain degree of infidelity; but that he was come now to a better way of thinking, and was fully ſatisfied of the truth of the Chriſtian revelation, though he was not clear as to every point conſidered to be orthodox. Being at all times a curious examiner of the human mind, and pleaſed with an undiſguiſed diſplay of what had paſſed in it. Johnſon called to him with warmth, and ſaid, "Give me your hand; I have taken a liking to you." He then began to deſcant upon the force of teſtimony, and the little we could

could know of final cauſes; ſo that the objections of, Why was it ſo? or, Why was it not ſo? ought not to diſturb us: adding, that he himſelf had at one period been guilty of a temporary neglect of religion; but that it was not the reſult of argument, but mere abſence of thought.

After having given credit to reports of his bigotry, the reader will be agreeably ſurprized at hearing Johnſon expreſſing the following very liberal ſentiment, which has the additional value of obviating an objection to our holy religion, founded upon the diſcordant tenets of Chriſtians themſelves: "For my part, Sir, I think all Chriſtians, whether Papiſts or Proteſtants, agree in the eſſential articles, and that their differences are trivial, and rather political than religious."

At another time he obſerved, "The Chriſtian religion has very ſtrong evidences. It, indeed, appears in ſome degree ſtrange to reaſon; but in Hiſtory we have undoubted facts, againſt which, in reaſoning *à priori*, we have more arguments than we have for them; but then, teſtimony has great weight, and caſts the balance. I would recommend to every man whoſe faith is yet unſettled, Grotius, Dr. Pearſon, and Dr. Clarke."

Again.

Again: "As to the Chriſtian religion, beſides the ſtrong evidence which we have for it, there is a balance in its favour from the number of great men who have been convinced of its truth, after a ſerious conſideration of the queſtion. Grotius was an acute man, a lawyer, a man accuſtomed to examine evidence, and he was convinced. Grotius was not a recluſe, but a man of the world, who certainly had no bias to the ſide of religion. Sir Iſaac Newton ſet out an infidel, and came to be a very firm believer."

Johnſon ſaid, "No honeſt man could be a Deiſt; for no man could be ſo after a fair examination of the proofs of Chriſtianity." Hume was mentioned—JOHNSON. "No, Sir, Hume owned to a Clergyman in the biſhopric of Durham, that he had never read the New Teſtament with attention."

Talking of the Roman Catholic religion, Johnſon ſaid, "In the barbarous ages, Sir, prieſts and people were equally deceived; but afterwards there were groſs corruptions introduced by the Clergy, ſuch as indulgencies to prieſts to have concubines, and the worſhip of images, not, indeed, inculcated, but knowingly permitted."

Talking one day of Dr. Johnſon's unwillingneſs to believe extraordinary things, Mr. B. ventured to ſay, "Sir, you come near Hume's arguments

argument againſt miracles, "That it is more probable witneſſes ſhould lie, or be miſtaken, than that they ſhould happen."—JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, Hume, taking the propoſition ſimply, is right. But the Chriſtian revelation is not proved by the miracles alone, but as connected with propheſies, and with the doctrines in confirmation of which the miracles were wrought."

He repeated his obſervation, that the differences among Chriſtians are really of no conſequence. For inſtance (ſaid he), if a Proteſtant objects to a Papiſt, 'You worſhip images;' the Papiſt can anſwer, 'I do not inſiſt on *your* doing it; you may be a very good Papiſt without it: I do it only as a help to my devotion." It was obſerved, that the great article of Chriſtianity was the revelation of immortality. Johnſon admitted it.

Mr. Boſwell had hired a Bohemian as his ſervant while he remained in London, and being much pleaſed with him, aſked Dr. Johnſon whether his being a Roman Catholic ought to prevent his taking him with him to Scotland.—"Why no, Sir (ſaid Johnſon), If *he* has no objection, you can have none."—BOSWELL. "So, Sir, you are no great enemy to the Roman Catholic religion."—JOHNSON. "No, more, Sir, than to the Preſbyterian religion."—*B.* "You

are joking."—*J.* "No, Sir, I really think ſo. Nay, Sir, of the two I prefer the Popiſh."—*B.* "How ſo, Sir?"—*J.* "Why, Sir, the Preſbyterians have no church, no apoſtolical ordination."—*B.* "And do you think that abſolutely eſſential, Sir?"—*J.* "Why, Sir, as it was an apoſtolical inſtitution, I think it is dangerous to be without it. And, Sir, the Preſbyterians have no public worſhip: they have no form of prayer in which they know they are to join.—They go to hear a man pray, and are to judge whether they will join with him."—*B.* "But, Sir, their doctrine is the ſame with that of the Church of England. Their confeſſion of faith, and the thirty-nine articles, contain the ſame points, even the doctrine of predeſtination."—*J.* "Why, yes, Sir; predeſtination was a part of the clamour of the times, ſo it is mentioned in our articles, but with as little poſitiveneſs as could be."—*B.* "Is it neceſſary, Sir, to believe all the thirty-nine articles?"—*J.* "Why, Sir, that is a queſtion which has been much agitated. Some have thought it neceſſary that they ſhould all be believed; others have conſidered them to be only articles of peace, that is to ſay, you are not to preach againſt them."—*B.* "It appears to me, Sir, that predeſtination, or what is equivalent to it, cannot be avoided, if we hold an univerſal preſcience in the Deity."—*J.* "Why,

J. "Why, Sir, does not God every day ſee things going on without preventing them."—*B.* "True, Sir; but if a thing be certainly foreſeen, it muſt be fixed, and cannot happen otherwiſe; and if we apply this conſideration to the human mind, there is no free will, nor do I ſee how prayer can be of any avail." Dr. Johnſon mentioned Dr. Clarke, and Biſhop Bramhall on Liberty and Neceſſity, and bid Mr. B. read South's Sermons on Prayer, but avoided the queſtion which has excruciated philoſophers and divines, beyond any other. "I did not (ſays Mr. B.) preſs it further, when I perceived that he was diſpleaſed, and ſhrunk from any abridgement of an attribute uſually aſcribed to the Divinity, however irreconcilable in its full extent with the grand ſyſtem of moral government. His ſuppoſed orthodoxy here cramped the vigorous powers of his underſtanding. He was confined by a chain which early imagination and long habit made him think maſſy and ſtrong, but which, had he ventured to try, he could at once have ſnapt aſunder. Mr. B. proceeded: "What do you think, Sir, of Purgatory, as believed by the Roman Catholics?"—*J.* "Why, Sir, it is a very harmleſs doctrine. They are of opinion that the generality of mankind are neither ſo obſtinately wicked as to deſerve everlaſting puniſhment, nor ſo good as to

merit being admitted into the ſociety of bleſſed ſpirits ; and therefore that God is graciouſly pleaſed to allow of a middle ſtate, where they may be purified by certain degrees of ſuffering. You ſee, Sir, there is nothing unreaſonable in this."—*B.* " But then, Sir, their maſſes for the dead ?"—*J.* " Why, Sir, if it be once eſtabliſhed that there are ſouls in purgatory, it is as proper to pray for them, as for our brethren of mankind who are yet in this life."—*B.* " The idolatry of the Maſs ?"—*J.* " Sir, there is no idolatry in the Maſs. They believe God to be there, and they adore him."—*B.* " The worſhip of Saints ?"—*J.* " Sir, they do not worſhip Saints ; they invoke them ; they only aſk their prayers. I am talking all this time of the *doctrines* of the Church of Rome. I grant you that in *practice*, Purgatory is made a lucrative impoſition, and that the people do become idolatrous as they recommend themſelves to the tutelary protection of particular ſaints. I think their giving the ſacrament only in one kind is criminal, becauſe it is contrary to the expreſs inſtitution of Chriſt, and I wonder how the Council of Trent admitted it."—*B.* " Confeſſion ?"—*J.* " Why, I don't know but that is a good thing. The Scripture ſays, ' Confeſs your faults one to another ;' and the prieſts confeſs as well as the laity. Then it muſt be conſidered,

conſidered, that their abſolution is only upon repentance, and often upon penance alſo. You think your ſins may be forgiven without penance, upon repentance alone." I thus ventured to mention all the common objections againſt the Roman Catholic Church, that I might hear ſo great a man upon them. What he ſaid is here accurately recorded. But it is not improbable that if one had taken the other ſide, he might have reaſoned differently."

It muſt however be mentioned, that he had a reſpect for "*the old religion*," as the mild Melancthon called that of the Roman Catholic Church, even while he was exerting himſelf for its reformation in ſome particulars. Sir William Scott tells, that he heard Johnſon ſay, "A man who is converted from Proteſtantiſm to Popery, may be ſincere . he parts with nothing : he is only ſuperadding to what he already had. But a convert from Popery to Proteſtantiſm, gives up ſo much of what he has held as ſacred as any thing that he retains ; there is ſo much *laceration of mind* in ſuch a converſion, that it can hardly be ſincere and laſting." The truth of this reflection may be confirmed by many and eminent inſtances, ſome of which will occur to moſt readers.

Again, talking of the Roman Catholic religion, and how little difference there was in eſ-

ſenſial matters between ours and it, Johnſon ſaid, "True, Sir: all denominations of Chriſtians have really little difference in point of doctrine, though they may differ widely in external forms. There is a prodigious difference between the external form of one of our Preſbyterian churches in Scotland, and a church in Italy; yet the doctrine taught is eſſentially the ſame."

The petition to Parliament for removing the ſubſcription to the Thirty-nine Articles was mentioned. Johnſon obſerved, "It was ſoon thrown out. Sir, they talk of not making boys at the Univerſity ſubſcribe to what they do not underſtand: but they ought to conſider, that our Univerſities were founded to bring up members for the Church of England, and we muſt not ſupply our enemies with arms from our arſenal. No, Sir, the meaning of ſubſcribing is, not that they fully underſtand all the articles, but that they will adhere to the Church of England. Now take it in this way, and ſuppoſe that they ſhould only ſubſcribe their adherence to the Church of England, there would be ſtill the ſame difficulty; for ſtill the young men would be ſubſcribing to what they do not underſtand. For if you ſhould aſk them, what do you mean by the Church of England? Do you know in what it differs from the Preſbyterian

ſian Church? from the Romiſh Church? from the Greek Church? from the Coptic Church? they could not tell you. So, Sir, it comes to the ſame thing."—*B.* "But would it not be ſufficient to ſubſcribe the Bible.—*J.* "Why, no, Sir; for all ſects will ſubſcribe the Bible, nay, the Mahometans will ſubſcribe the Bible; for the Mahometans acknowledge Jeſus Chriſt, as well as Moſes; but maintain that God ſent Mahomet as a ſtill greater prophet than either."

Johnſon's profound reverence for the Hierarchy made him expect from Biſhops the higheſt degree of decorum; he was offended even at their going to taverns: "A biſhop (ſaid he) has nothing to do at a tipling houſe. It is not indeed immoral in him to go to a tavern; neither would it be immoral in him to whip a top in Groſvenor-ſquare; but if he did, I hope the boys would fall upon him, and apply the whip to him. There are gradations in conduct; there is morality, decency, propri[illegible] None of theſe ſhould be violated by a biſhop. A biſhop ſhould not go to a houſe where he may meet a young fellow leading out a wench."

He alſo diſapproved of biſhops going to routs, at leaſt of their ſtaying at them longer than their preſence commanded reſpect. He mentioned a particular biſhop. "Poh! (ſaid Mrs. Thrale) the Biſhop of —— is never minded at a rout."—BOSWELL. "When a biſhop places

himſelf in a ſituation where he has no diſtinct character, and is of no conſequence, he degrades the dignity of his order."—JOHNSON. Mr. Boſwell, Madam, has ſaid it as correctly as it could be."

Nor was it only in the dignitaries of the Church that Johnſon required a particular decorum and delicacy of behaviour: he juſtly conſidered that the Clergy, as perſons ſet apart for the ſacred office of ſerving at the altar, and impreſſing the minds of men with the aweful concerns of a future ſtate, ſhould be ſomewhat more ſerious than the generality of mankind, and have a ſuitable compoſure of manners. A due ſenſe of the dignity of their profeſſion, independent of higher motives, will ever prevent them from loſing their diſtinction in an indiſcriminate ſociality; and did ſuch as affect this know how much it leſſens them in the eyes of thoſe whom they think to pleaſe by it, they would feel themſelves much mortified.

Johnſon and his friend Beauclerk were once together in company with ſeveral clergymen, who thought that they ſhould appear to advantage by aſſuming the lax jollity of *men of the world*; which, as it may be obſerved in ſimilar caſes, they carried to a noiſy exceſs. Johnſon, who they expected would be *entertained*, ſat grave and ſilent for ſome time; at laſt, turning to Beauclerk,

Beauclerk, he ſaid, by no means in a whiſper, "This merriment of parſons is mightily offenſive."

Even the dreſs of a clergyman ſhould be in character, and nothing can be more deſpicable than conceited attempts at avoiding the appearance of the clerical order; attempts, which are as ineffectual as they are pitiful. Dr. Porteus, now Biſhop of London, in his excellent charge when preſiding over the dioceſe of Cheſter, juſtly animadverts upon this ſubject; and obſerves of a reverend fop, that he "can be but half a beau."

Addiſon, in "The Spectator," has given a fine portrait of a clergyman, who is ſuppoſed to be a member of his Club; and Johnſon has exhibited a model, in the character of Mr. Mudge, which has eſcaped the collectors of his works, but which he owned to Mr. Boſwell, and which indeed he ſhewed to Sir Joſhua Reynolds at the time when it was written. It bears the genuine marks of Johnſon's beſt manner, and is as follows:

"The Reverend Mr. Zachariah Mudge, Prebendary of Exeter, and Vicar of St. Andrew's in Plymouth; a man equally eminent for his virtues and abilities, and at once beloved as a companion, and reverenced as a paſtor. He had that general curioſity to which no kind of knowledge

ledge is indifferent or ſuperfluous; and that general benevolence by which no order of men is hated or deſpiſed.

"His principles both of thought and action were great and comprehenſive. By a ſolicitous examination of objections, and judicious compariſon of oppoſite arguments, he attained what enquiry never gives but to induſtry and perſpicuity, a firm and unſhaken ſettlement of conviction. But his firmneſs was without aſperity; for knowing with how much difficulty truth was ſometimes found, he did not wonder that many miſſed it.

"The general courſe of his life was determined by his profeſſion: he ſtudied the ſacred volumes in the original languages; with what diligence and ſucceſs, his 'Notes upon the Pſalms' give ſufficient evidence. He once endeavoured to add the knowledge of Arabic to that of Hebrew; but finding his thoughts too much diverted from other ſtudies, after ſome time deſiſted from his purpoſe.

"His diſcharge of parochial duties was exemplary. How his Sermons were compoſed, may be learned from the excellent volume which he has given to the public; but how they were delivered can be known only to thoſe who heard them; for as he appeared in the pulpit, words will not eaſily deſcribe him. His delivery, though

though unconſtrained, was not negligent, and though forcible, was not turbulent; diſdaining anxious nicety of emphaſis, and laboured artifice of action, it captivated the hearer by its natural dignity, it rouſed the ſluggiſh, and fixed the volatile, and detained the mind upon the ſubject, without directing it to the ſpeaker.

"The grandeur and ſolemnity of the preacher did not intrude upon his general behaviour; at the table of his friends he was a companion communicative and attentive, of unaffected manners, of manly cheerfulneſs, willing to pleaſe, and eaſy to be pleaſed. His acquaintance was univerſally ſolicited, and his preſence obſtructed no enjoyment which religion did not forbid. Though ſtudious he was popular; though argumentative he was modeſt; though inflexible he was candid; and though metaphyſical yet orthodox."

JOHNSON, ſpeaking of religious ſecluſion, ſaid, "If convents ſhould be allowed at all, they ſhould only be retreats for perſons unable to ſerve the public, or who have ſerved it. It is our firſt duty to ſerve Society, and after we have done that we may attend wholly to the ſalvation of our own ſouls. A youthful paſſion for abſtracted devotion ſhould not be encouraged. It is as unreaſonable for a man to go into a Carthuſian convent for fear of being immoral, as for

for a man to cut off his hands for fear he ſhould ſteal. There is indeed great reſolution in the immediate act of diſmembering himſelf; but when that is once done, he has no longer any merit; for though it is out of his power to ſteal, yet he may all his life be a thief in his heart. So when a man has once become a Carthuſian, he is obliged to continue ſo, whether he chooſes it or not. Their ſilence too is abſurd. We read in the Goſpel of the Apoſtles being ſent to preach, but not to hold their tongues. 'All ſeverity that does not tend to increaſe good, or prevent evil, is idle. I ſaid to the Lady Abbeſs of a convent, 'Madam, you are here, not for the love of virtue, but the fear of vice. She ſaid, ſhe ſhould remember this as long as ſhe lived." It was, perhaps, hard to give her this view of her ſituation, when ſhe could not help it; and, indeed, we may wonder at the whole of what he ſaid on this ſubject, becauſe both in his "Rambler" and "Idler," he treats religious auſterities with much ſolemnity of reſpect.

To a young clergyman in the country, Dr. Johnſon gave the following valuable advice, which may be not unuſeful, we think, to Divines in general:

"You are afraid of falling into ſome improprieties in the daily ſervice by reading to an audience

audience that requires no exactneſs. Your fear, I hope, ſecures you from danger. They who contract abſurd habits are ſuch as have no fear. It is impoſſible to do the ſame thing very often, without ſome peculiarity of manner; but that manner may be good or bad, and a little care will at leaſt preſerve it from being bad. to make it good, there muſt, I think, be ſomething of natural or caſual felicity, which cannot be taught.

" Your preſent method of making your ſermons ſeems very judicious. Few frequent preachers can be ſuppoſed to have ſermons more their own than yours will be. Take care to regiſter ſomewhere or other, the authors from whom your ſeveral diſcourſes are borrowed; and do not imagine that you ſhall always remember, even what perhaps, you now think it impoſſible to forget.

" My advice, however, is, that you attempt, from time to time, an original ſermon; and in the labour of compoſition, do not burthen your mind with too much at once; do not exact from yourſelf at one effort of excogitation, propriety of thought, and elegance of expreſſion. Invent firſt, and then embelliſh. The production of ſomething, where nothing was before, is an act of greater energy, than the expanſion or decoration of the thing produced. Set down diligently

diligently your thoughts as they riſe in the firſt words that occur; and, when you have matter, you will eaſily give it form: nor, perhaps, will this method be always neceſſary; for by habit, your thoughts and diction will flow together.

"The compoſition of ſermons is not very difficult: the diviſions not only help the memory of the hearer, but direct the judgment of the writer; they ſupply ſources of invention, and keep every part in its proper place.

"What I like leaſt is your account of manners in your pariſh; from which I find that it has been long neglected by the parſon. The Dean of Carliſle, when he was a little rector in Northamptonſhire, told me, that it might be diſcerned whether or no there was a clergyman reſident in a pariſh, by the civil or ſavage manner of a people. Such a congregation as yours ſtands in need of much reformation, and I would not have you think it impoſſible to reform them. A very ſavage pariſh was civilized by a decayed gentlewoman, who came among them to teach a petty ſchool. My learned friend Dr. Wheeler of Oxford, when he was a young man, had the care of a neighbouring pariſh for fifteen pounds a year; which he was never paid; but he counted it a convenience that it compelled him to make a ſermon weekly. One woman he could not bring to the commu-

nion;

nion; and when he reproved or exhorted her, ſhe only anſwered, that ſhe was no ſcholar. He was adviſed to ſet ſome good woman or man of the pariſh, a little wiſer than herſelf, to talk to her in a language level to her mind.—Such honeſt, I may call them holy artifices, muſt be practiſed by every clergyman; for all means muſt be tried by which ſouls may be ſaved. Talk to your people, however, as much as you can; and you will find, that the more frequently you converſe with them upon religious ſubjects, the more willingly they will attend, and the more ſubmiſſively they will learn. A clergyman's diligence always makes him venerable."

LITERATURE.

LITERATURE.

TALKING of Hiſtory, Johnſon ſaid, "We may know hiſtorical facts to be true, as we may know facts in common life to be true. Motives are generally unknown. We cannot truſt to the characters we find in hiſtory, unleſs when they are drawn by thoſe who knew the perſons; as thoſe for inſtance by Salluſt and Lord Clarendon."

"Great abilities (he ſaid) were not requiſite for an hiſtorian; for in hiſtorical compoſition, all the great powers of the human mind are quieſcent. He has facts ready to his hands; ſo there is no exerciſe of invention. Imagination is not required in any high degree; only about as much as is uſed in the lower kinds of poetry. Some penetration, accuracy, and colouring will fit a man for the taſk, if he can give the application which is neceſſary."

After remarking that, "There are few writers who have gained any reputation by recording their own actions," he obſerved,

"We may reduce the Egotiſts to four claſſes. In the *firſt* we have Julius Cæſar; he relates his own tranſactions, but he relates them with peculiar force and dignity, and his narrative is ſupported by the greatneſs of his character

and atchievements. In the *ſecond* claſs we have Marcus Antoninus; this writer has given us a ſeries of reflections on his own life; but his ſentiments are ſo noble, his morality ſo ſublime, that his meditations are univerſally admired. In the *third* claſs we have ſome others of tolerable credit, who have given importance to their own private hiſtory by an intermixture of literary anecdotes, and the occurrences of their own times; the celebrated Huetius has publiſhed an entertaining volume upon this plan, '*De rebus ad eum pertinentibus.*' In the *fourth* claſs we have the journaliſts, temporal and ſpiritual; Elias Aſhmole, William Lilly, George Whitfield, John Weſley, and a thouſand other old women and fanatick writers of memoirs and meditations."

"Lord Hailes's 'Annals of Scotland' (ſaid he) have not that painted form which is the taſte of this age; but it is a book which will always ſell, it has ſuch a ſtability of dates, ſuch a certainty of facts, and ſuch a punctuality of citation. I never before read Scotch hiſtory with certainty."

Talking of antiquarian reſearches, Johnſon ſaid, "All that is really *known* of the ancient ſtate of Britain is contained in a few pages. We *can* know no more than what the old writers have told us; yet what large books have

we upon it, the whole of which, excepting ſuch parts as are taken from thoſe old writers, is all a dream, ſuch as Whitaker's 'Mancheſter.' I have heard Henry's 'Hiſtory of Britain' well ſpoken of; I am told it is carried on in ſeparate diviſions, as the civil, the military, the religious hiſtory; I wiſh much to have one branch well done, and that is the hiſtory of manners; of common life."—Dr. Robertſon obſerved, "Henry ſhould have applied his attention to that alone, which is enough for any man; and he might have found a great deal ſcattered in various books, had he read ſolely with that view. Henry erred in not ſelling his firſt volume at a moderate price to the bookſellers, that they might have puſhed him on till he had got reputation. I ſold my 'Hiſtory of Scotland' at a moderate price, as a work by which the bookſellers might either gain or not; and Cadell has told me that Millar and he have got ſix thouſand pounds by it. I afterwards received a much higher price for my writings. An author ſhould ſell his work for what the bookſellers will give, till it ſhall appear whether he is an author of merit, or, which is the ſame thing as to purchaſe-money, an author who pleaſes the public."

On a queſtion whether Martinelli ſhould continue his Hiſtory of England to the preſent day,

day, Goldſmith ſaid, "To be ſure he ſhould."—JOHNSON. "No, Sir; he would give great offence. He would have to tell of almoſt all the living great what they do not wiſh told."—GOLDSMITH. "It may, perhaps, be neceſſary for a native to be more cautious; but a foreigner, who comes among us without prejudice, may be conſidered as holding the place of a Judge, and may ſpeak his mind freely."—*J.* "Sir, a foreigner, when he ſends a work from the preſs, ought to be on his guard againſt catching the error and miſtaken enthuſiaſm of the people among whom he happens to be."—*G.* "Sir, he wants only to ſell his hiſtory, and to tell truth; one an honeſt, the other a laudable motive."—*J.* "Sir, they are both laudable motives. It is laudable in a man to wiſh to live by his labours; but he ſhould write ſo as he may *live* by them, not ſo as he may be knocked on the head. I would adviſe him to be at Calais before he publiſhes his hiſtory of the preſent age. A foreigner, who attaches himſelf to a political party in this country, is in the worſt ſtate that can be imagined; he is looked upon as a mere intermeddler. A native may do it from intereſt."—BOSWELL. "Or principle."—*G.* "There are people who tell a hundred political lies every day, and are not hurt by it. Surely then one may tell truth with ſafety."—*J.* "Why, Sir, in the firſt

place, he who tells a hundred lies has diſarmed the force of his lies. But beſides; a man had rather have a hundred lies told of him, than one truth which he does not wiſh ſhould be told."—*G.* "For my part, I'd tell truth, and ſhame the devil."—*J.* "Yes, Sir; but the devil will be angry. I wiſh to ſhame the devil as much as you do, but I ſhould chooſe to be out of the reach of his claws."—*G.* "His claws can do you no harm, when you have the ſhield of truth."

Talking of letter-writing, Johnſon obſerved, "It is now become ſo much the faſhion to publiſh letters, that in order to avoid it, I put as little into mine as I can."—"Do what you will, Sir (ſaid Mr. Boſwell), you cannot avoid it. Should you even write as ill as you can, your letters would be publiſhed as curioſities:

'Behold a miracle! inſtead of wit,
'See two dull lines with Stanhope's pencil writ.'

Johnſon's attention to preciſion and clearneſs in expreſſion was very remarkable. He diſapproved of parentheſes; and perhaps in all his voluminous writings not half a dozen of them will be found. He never uſed the phraſes *the former* and *the latter*, having obſerved that they often occaſioned obſcurity; he therefore contrived to conſtruct his ſentences ſo as not to have occaſion for them, and would even ra-

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ther repeat the ſame words in order to avoid them. Nothing is more common than to miſtake ſirnames when we hear them careleſsly uttered for the firſt time. To prevent this, he uſed not only to pronounce them ſlowly and diſtinctly, but to take the trouble of ſpelling them.

He was no admirer of blank verſe, and ſaid it always failed, unleſs ſuſtained by the dignity of the ſubject. In blank verſe, he ſaid, the language ſuffered more diſtortion to keep it out of proſe, than any inconvenience or limitation to be apprehended from the ſhackles and circumſpection of rhyme.

Johnſon one day, for ſport perhaps, or from the ſpirit of contradiction, eagerly maintained, that Derrick had merit as a writer. Mr. Morgan argued with him in vain. At length he had recourſe to this device: "Pray, Sir (ſaid he), do you reckon Derrick or Smart the beſt poet?" Johnſon at once felt himſelf rouſed; and anſwered, "Sir, there is no ſettling the point of precedency between a louſe and a flea."

After having on ſome occaſion made obſervations upon the ſimilarity between 'Raſſelas' and 'Candide,' he ſaid, 'Candide' he thought had more power in it than any thing that Voltaire had written.

Of Horace he obſerved, that his lyrick poetry could never be perfectly tranſlated; ſo much of the excellence is in the numbers and the expreſſion. "Francis (ſaid he) has done it the beſt; I'll take his, five out of ſix, againſt them all."

Of the Preface to Capel's Shakſpeare, he ſaid, "If the man would have come to me, I would have endeavoured to 'endow his purpoſes with words;' for as it is, 'he doth gabble monſtrouſly.'"

Of Mr. Longley at Rocheſter, a gentleman of very conſiderable learning, whom Dr. Johnſon met there, he ſaid, "My heart warms towards him. I was ſurpriſed to find in him ſuch a nice acquaintance with the metre in the learned languages; though I was ſomewhat mortified that I had it not ſo much to myſelf, as I ſhould have thought."

He once obſerved, "A man ſhould begin to write ſoon; for if he waits till his judgment is matured, his inability, through want of practice, to expreſs his conceptions, will make the diſproportion ſo great between what he ſees, and what he can attain, that he will probably be diſcouraged from writing at all. As a proof of the juſtneſs of this remark, we may inſtance what is related of the great Lord Granville; that after he had written his letter, giving an account of the battle of Dettingen, he ſaid, 'Here

'Here is a letter, expreſſed in terms not good enough for a tallow-chandler to have uſed."

Having ſpent one evening at Mr. Langton's with the Rev. Dr. Parr, he was much pleaſed with the converſation of that learned gentleman; and, after he was gone, ſaid to Mr. Langton, "Sir, I am obliged to you for having aſked me this evening. Parr is a fair man. I do not know when I have had an occaſion of ſuch free controverſy. It is remarkable how much of a man's life may paſs without meeting with any inſtance of this kind of open diſcuſſion."

He thought we might fairly inſtitute a criticiſm between Shakſpeare and Corneille, as they both had, though in a different degree, the lights of a latter age. "It is not ſo juſt between the Greek dramatic writers and Shakſpeare. It may be replied to what is ſaid by one of the remarkers on Shakſpeare, that though Darius's ſhade had *preſcience*, it does not neceſſarily follow that he had all *paſt* particulars revealed to him."

He once told in his lively manner the following literary anecdote: "Green and Guthrie, an Iriſhman and a Scotchman, undertook a tranſlation of Duhalde's 'Hiſtory of China.' Green ſaid of Guthrie, that he knew no Engliſh; and Guthrie of Green, that he knew no French; and theſe two undertook to

tranſlate Duhalde's 'Hiſtory of China.' In this tranſlation there was found 'the twenty-ſixth day of the new moon.' Now as the whole age of the moon is but twenty-eight days, the moon, inſtead of being new, was nearly as old as it could be. Their blunder aroſe from their miſtaking the word *neuviéme* ninth, for *nouvelle* or *neuve* new."

Of Guthrie, however, Johnſon ſaid, "He is a man of parts. He has no great regular fund of knowledge; but by reading ſo long, and writing ſo long, he no doubt has picked up a good deal."

Talking of Dr. Blagden's copiouſneſs and preciſion of communication, Dr. Johnſon ſaid, "Blagden, Sir, is a delightful fellow."

Johnſon praiſed the Earl of Carliſle's Poems, which his Lordſhip had publiſhed with his name, as not diſdaining to be a candidate for literary fame. He was of opinion, that when a man of rank appeared in that character, he deſerved to have his merit handſomely allowed. In this he was more liberal than Mr. William Whitehead, in his 'Elegy to Lord Villiers,' in which under the pretext of "ſuperior toils demanding all their care," he diſcovers a jealouſy of the great paying their court to the Muſes:

"———— to the choſen few
"Who dare excel, thy foſt'ring aid afford,
"Their arts, their magick powers, with honours due
"Exalt;—but be thyſelf what they record."

The

The ſubject of quotation being once introduced, Mr. Wilkes (who was preſent) cenſured it as pedantry. Johnſon ſaid, "No, Sir, it is a good thing; there is a community of mind in it. Claſſical quotation is the *parole* of literary men all over the world."—WILKES. "Upon the continent they all quote the vulgate Bible. Shakſpeare is chiefly quoted here; and we quote alſo Pope, Prior, Butler, Waller, and ſometimes Cowley."

Johnſon one day gave an entertaining account of *Bet Flint*, a woman of the town, who, with ſome eccentrick talents and much effrontery, forced herſelf upon his acquaintance. "Bet (ſaid he) wrote her own Life in verſe * which ſhe brought to me, wiſhing that I would furniſh her with a Preface to it (laughing). I uſed to ſay of her that ſhe was generally, ſlut and drunkard;—occaſionally, proſtitute and thief. She had, however, genteel lodgings, a ſpinnet on which ſhe played, and a boy that walked before her chair. Poor Bet was taken up on a charge of ſtealing a counterpane, and tried at the Old Bailey. Chief Juſtice *****, who loved a wench, ſummed up favourably, and ſhe was acquitted. After which, Bet ſaid,

* The Doctor, whoſe memory was wonderfully retentive, remembered the firſt four lines of this curious production to be,

"When firſt I drew my vital breath,
"A little minikin I came upon earth;
"And then I came from a dark abode,
"Into this gay and gaudy world."

with

they are not ſcholars, and ſo proceed upon the mere power of their own minds; and we ſee how very little power they have."

He was of opinion, that the Engliſh nation cultivated both their ſoil and their reaſon better than any other people; but admitted that the French, though not the higheſt, perhaps in any department of literature, yet in every department were very high. Intellectual pre-eminence, he obſerved, was the higheſt ſuperiority; and every nation derived their higheſt reputation from the ſplendor and dignity of their writers. Voltaire, he ſaid, was a good narrator, and his principal merit conſiſted in a happy ſelection and arrangement of circumſtances.

Speaking of the French novels, compared with Richardſon's, he ſaid they might be pretty baubles, but a wren was not an eagle.

In a Latin converſation with the Pere Boſcovitz, at the houſe of Mrs. Cholmondeley, he maintained the ſuperiority of Sir Iſaac Newton over all foreign philoſophers, with a dignity and eloquence that ſurprized that learned foreigner. It being obſerved to him, that a rage for every thing Engliſh prevailed much in France after Lord Chatham's glorious war, he ſaid he did not wonder at it, for that we had drubbed thoſe fellows into a proper reverence

for

for us, and that their national petulance required periodical chaſtiſement.

Being once told that Gilbert Cowper called him the Caliban of literature, "Well (ſaid he), I muſt dub him the Punchinello."

He ſpoke with much contempt of the notice taken of Woodhouſe, the poetical ſhoemaker. He ſaid, that it was all vanity and childiſhneſs; and that ſuch objects were, to thoſe who patroniſed them, mere mirrors of their own ſuperiority. "They had better (ſaid he) furniſh the man with good implements for his trade, than raiſe ſubſcriptions for his poems. He may make an excellent ſhoemaker, but he can never make a good poet. A ſchool boy's exerciſe may be a pretty thing for a ſchool-boy; but it is no treat for a man."

Speaking of the old Earl of Cork and Orrery, he ſaid, "That man ſpent his life in catching at an object (literary eminence), which he had not power to graſp."

Talking of Tacitus, Mr. Boſwell hazarded an opinion, that with all his merit for penetration, ſhrewdneſs of judgment, and terſeneſs of expreſſion, he was too compact, too much broken into hints, as it were, and therefore too difficult to be underſtood. Dr. Johnſon ſanctioned this opinion. "Tacitus, Sir, ſeems to me rather to have made notes for an hiſtorical work, than to have written a hiſtory."

At

At another time the converſation having turned on modern imitations of ancient ballads, and ſome one having praiſed their ſimplicity, he treated them with that ridicule which he always diſplayed when that ſubject was mentioned.

A gentleman expreſſing his wonder why the author of ſo excellent a book as 'The Whole Duty of Man' ſhould conceal himſelf, Johnſon ſaid, "There may be different reaſons aſſigned for this, one of which would be very ſufficient. He may have been a clergyman, and may have thought that his religious counſels would have leſs weight when known to come from a man whoſe profeſſion was Theology. He may have been a man whoſe practice was not ſuitable to his principles, ſo that his character might injure the effect of his book, which he had written in a ſeaſon of penitence; or he may have been a man of rigid ſelf-denial, ſo that he would have no reward for his pious labours while in this world, but refer it all to a future ſtate."

Talking of birds, Mr. Daines Barrington's ingenious Eſſay againſt the received notion of their migration was mentioned. Johnſon ſaid, "I think we have as good evidence for the migration of woodcocks as can be deſired. We find they diſappear at a certain time of the year;

year, and appear again at a certain time of the year; and ſome of them, when weary in their flight, have been known to alight on the rigging of ſhips far out at ſea." One of the company obſerved, that there had been inſtances of ſome of them found in ſummer in Eſſex. JOHNSON. "Sir, that ſtrengthens our argument. *Exceptio probat regulam.* Some being found ſhews, that if all remained many would be found. A few ſick or lame ones may be found."—GOLDSMITH. "There is a partial migration of the ſwallows; the ſtronger ones migrate, the others do not."

At Mr. Langton's with Dr. Beattie and ſome other company, Johnſon deſcanted on the ſubject of Literary Property. "There ſeems (ſaid he) to be in authors a ſtronger right of property than that by occupancy; a metaphyſical right, a right, as it were, of creation, which ſhould from its nature be perpetual; but the conſent of nations is againſt it, and indeed reaſon and the intereſts of learning are againſt it; for were it to be perpetual, no book, however uſeful, could be univerſally diffuſed amongſt mankind, ſhould the proprietor take it into his head to reſtrain the circulation. No book could have the advantage of being edited with notes, however neceſſary to its elucidation, ſhould the proprietor per-

verſely oppoſe it. For the general good of the world, therefore, whatever valuable work has once been created by an author, and iſſued out by him, ſhould be underſtood as no longer in his power, but as belonging to the public; at the ſame time the author is entitled to an adequate reward. This he ſhould have by an excluſive right to his work for a conſiderable number of years."

He diſapproved much of mingling real facts with fiction. On this account he cenſured a book intitled, 'Love and Madneſs.'

Mr. Boſwell once aſked if the 'Turkiſh Spy' was a genuine book? Johnſon replied, "No, Sir. Mrs. Manley, in her 'Life,' ſays, that her father wrote the two firſt Volumes; and in another book, 'Dunton's Life and Errors,' we find that the reſt was written by one *Sault*, at two guineas a ſheet, under the direction of Dr. Midgeley."

Speaking of one who with more than ordinary boldneſs attacked public meaſures and the royal family, he ſaid, "I think he is ſafe from the law, but he is an abuſive ſcoundrel; and inſtead of applying to my Lord Chief Juſtice to puniſh him, I would ſend half a dozen footmen and have him well ducked."

He cenſured a writer of entertaining Travels for aſſuming a feigned character, ſaying (in

(in his ſenſe of the word), "He carries out one lie; we know not how many he brings back."

He apprehended that the delineation of *characters* in the end of the firſt Book of the 'Retreat of the Ten Thouſand' was the firſt inſtance of the kind that was known.

Johnſon ſpoke unfavourably of a certain pretty voluminous author, ſaying, "He uſed to write anonymous books, and then other books commending thoſe books; in which there was ſomething of raſcality."

Mr. Boſwell one day told him he had been that morning at a meeting of the people called Quakers, where he had heard a woman preach. Johnſon obſerved, "Sir, a woman's preaching is like a dog's walking on his hinder legs. It is not done well; but you are ſurprized to find it done at all."

"After we came out of the church one Sunday (ſays Mr. Boſwell), we ſtood talking for ſome time together of Biſhop Berkeley's ſophiſtry to prove the non-exiſtence of matter, and that every thing in the univerſe is merely ideal. I obſerved, that though we are ſatisfied his doctrine is not true, it is impoſſible to refute it. But never ſhall I forget the alacrity with which Johnſon anſwered, ſtriking his foot with mighty force againſt a large ſtone, till he

rebounded from it, 'I refute it *thus*.' This was a ſtout exemplification of the *firſt truths* of *Pere Bouffier*, or the *original principles* of Reid and of Beattie; without admitting which, we can no more argue in metaphyſicks, than we can argue in mathematicks without axioms. To me (adds Mr. B.) it is not conceivable how Berkeley can be anſwered by pure reaſoning; but I know that the nice and difficult taſk was to have been undertaken by one of the moſt luminous minds of the preſent age, had not politics 'turned him from calm philoſophy aſide.' What an admirable diſplay of ſubtilty, united with brilliance, might his contending with Berkeley have afforded us. How muſt we, when we reflect on the loſs of ſuch an intellectual feaſt, regret that he ſhould be characteriſed as the man,

"Who born for the univerſe narrow'd his mind,
"And to party gave up what was meant for mankind?"

Talking of the origin of language, Johnſon ſaid, "It muſt have come by inſpiration. A thouſand, nay a million of children could not invent a language. While the organs are pliable, there is not underſtanding enough to form a language; by the time that there is underſtanding enough, the organs are become ſtiff. We know that after a certain age we cannot learn to pronounce a new language.

No foreigner, who comes to England when advanced in life, ever pronounces Engliſh tolerably well; at leaſt ſuch inſtances are very rare. When I maintain that language muſt have come by inſpiration, I do not mean that inſpiration is required for rhetorick, and all the beauties of language; for when once man has language, we can conceive that he may gradually form modifications of it. I mean only that inſpiration ſeems to me to be neceſſary to give man the faculty of ſpeech; to inform him that he may have ſpeech; which I think he could no more find out without inſpiration, than cows or hogs would think of ſuch a faculty."—Mr. Walker, the philologer, who was preſent, ſaid, "Do you think, Sir, that there are any perfect ſynonimes in any language?"—JOHNSON. "Originally there were not; but by uſing words negligently, or in poetry, one word comes to be confounded with another."

On occaſion of a propoſed tranſlation of the Bible, he obſerved, "I am not very willing that any language ſhould be totally extinguiſhed. The ſimilitude and derivation of languages afford the moſt indubitable proof of the traduction of nations, and the genealogy of mankind. They add often phyſical certainty to hiſtorical evidence; and often ſupply the only evidence of ancient migrations,

and of the revolutions of ages which left no written monuments behind them.

"Every man's opinions (continued he), at leaſt his deſires, are a little influenced by his favourite ſtudies. My zeal for languages may ſeem, perhaps, rather over-heated, even to thoſe by whom I deſire to be well-eſteemed. To thoſe who have nothing in their thoughts but trade or policy, preſent power, or preſent money, I ſhould not think it neceſſary to defend my opinions; but with men of letters I would not unwillingly compound, by wiſhing the continuance of every language, however narrow in its extent, or however incommodious for common purpoſes, till it is repoſited in ſome verſion of a known book, that it may be always hereafter examined and compared with other languages, and then permitting its diſuſe: for this purpoſe the tranſlation of the Bible is moſt to be deſired. It is not certain that the ſame method will not preſerve the Highland language for the purpoſes of learning, and aboliſh it from daily uſe. When the Highlanders read the Bible, they will naturally wiſh to have its obſcurities cleared, and to know the hiſtory, collateral or appendant. Knowledge always deſires increaſe; it is like fire, which muſt firſt be kindled by ſome external agent, but which will afterwards propagate itſelf. When they

once

once deſire to learn, they will naturally have recourſe to the neareſt language by which that deſire can be gratified; and one will tell another that if he would attain knowledge, he muſt learn Engliſh.

"This ſpeculation may, perhaps, be thought more ſubtle than the groſſneſs of real life will eaſily admit. Let it however be remembered, that the efficacy of ignorance has been long tried, and has not produced the conſequence expected. Let knowledge, therefore, take its turn; and let the patrons of privation ſtand awhile aſide, and admit the operation of poſitive principles."

General Paoli once talked of languages being formed on the particular notions and manners of a people, without knowing which we cannot know the language. We may by alluſion to other ideas. "Sir (ſaid Johnſon), you talk of language, as if you had never done any thing elſe but ſtudy it, inſtead of governing a nation."—The General ſaid, "*Queſto e un troppo gran complimento*," this is too great a compliment. Johnſon anſwered, "I ſhould have thought ſo, Sir, if I had not heard you talk."

Mr. Erſkine one day told Johnſon, that when he was in the iſland of Minorca, he not only read prayers, but preached two ſermons

to the regiment. He ſeemed to object to the paſſage in ſcripture where we are told that the angel of the Lord ſmote in one night forty thouſand Aſſyrians. "Sir (ſaid the Doctor), you ſhould recollect that there was a ſupernatural interpoſition; they were deſtroyed by peſtilence. You are not to ſuppoſe that the angel of the Lord went about and ſtabbed each of them with a dagger, or knocked them on the head, man by man."

Talking on the ſubject of taſte in the arts, he obſerved, that difference of taſte was, in truth, difference of ſkill. Mr. Boſwell ſaid, "But, Sir, is there not a quality called taſte, which conſiſts merely in perception or in liking? For inſtance, we find people differ much as to what is the beſt ſtyle of Engliſh compoſition. Some think Swift's the beſt; others prefer a fuller and grander way of writing."—JOHNSON. "Sir, you muſt firſt define what you mean by ſtyle, before you can judge who has a good taſte in ſtyle, and who has a bad. The two claſſes of perſons whom you have mentioned don't differ as to good and bad. They both agree that Swift has a good neat ſtyle; but one loves a neat ſtyle, another loves a ſtyle of more ſplendour. In like manner, one loves a plain coat, another loves a laced coat; but neither will deny that each is good in its kind."

Speaking

Speaking of reading, "Snatches of reading, he ſaid, will not make a Bentley or a Clarke. They are, however, in a certain degree advantageous. I would put a child into a library (where no unfit books are), and let him read at his choice. A child ſhould not be diſcouraged from reading any thing that he takes a liking to, from a notion that it is above his reach. If that be the caſe the child will ſoon find it out and deſiſt; if not, he of courſe gains the inſtruction; which is ſo much the more likely to come, from the inclination with which he takes up the ſtudy."

Mr. Andrew Stuart's plauſible Letters to Lord Mansfield, a copy of which had been ſent by the author to Dr. Johnſon, becoming the ſubject of converſation, Johnſon ſaid, "They have not anſwered the end. They have not been talked of; I have never heard of them. This is owing to their not being ſold. People ſeldom read a book which is given to them; and few are given. The way to ſpread a work is to ſell it at a low price. No man will ſend to buy a thing that coſts even ſixpence, without an intention to read it."—Boswell. "May it not be doubted, Sir, whether it be proper to publiſh letters, arraigning the ultimate deciſion of an important cauſe by the ſupreme judicature of the nation?"—*J.* "No, Sir, I do not think it was

wrong to publiſh theſe letters. If they are thought to do harm, why not anſwer them? But they will do no harm."

Somebody found fault with writing verſes in a dead language, maintaining that they were merely arrangements of ſo many words; and laughed at the Univerſities of Oxford and Cambridge for ſending forth collections of them not only in Greek and Latin, but even in Syriac, Arabick, and other more unknown tongues. Johnſon obſerved, "I would have as many of theſe as poſſible; I would have verſes in every language that there are the means of acquiring. Nobody imagines that an Univerſity is to have at once two hundred poets; but it ſhould be able to ſhow two hundred ſcholars. Peireſc's death was lamented, I think, in forty languages; and I would have had at every coronation, and every death of a king, every *Gaudium*, and every *Luctus*, Univerſity verſes in as many languages as can be acquired. I would have the world to be thus told, 'Here is a ſchool where every thing may be learnt."

The topick was once introduced, which is often ignorantly urged, that the Univerſities of England are too rich; ſo that learning does not flouriſh in them, as it would do if thoſe who teach had ſmaller ſalaries, and depended on their aſſiduity for a great part of their income.

come. Johnſon ſaid, " Sir, the very reverſe of this is the truth ; the Engliſh Univerſities are not rich enough. Our fellowſhips are only ſufficient to ſupport a man during his ſtudies to fit him for the world, and accordingly in general they are held no longer than till an opportunity offers of getting away. Now and then, perhaps, there is a fellow who grows old in his college ; but this is againſt his will, unleſs he be a man very indolent indeed. A hundred a year is reckoned a good fellowſhip, and that is no more than is neceſſary to keep a man decently as a ſcholar. We do not allow our fellows to marry, becauſe we conſider academical inſtitutions as preparatory to a ſettlement in the world. It is only by being employed as a tutor, that a fellow can obtain any thing more than a livelihood. To be ſure a man who has enough without teaching will not teach ; for we would all be idle if we could. In the ſame manner, a man who is to get nothing by teaching, will not exert himſelf. Greſham College was intended as a place of inſtruction for London ; able profeſſors were to read lectures gratis, and they contrived to have no ſcholars ; whereas if they had been allowed to receive but ſixpence a lecture from each ſcholar, they would have been emulous to have had many ſcholars. Every body will agree that it ſhould be the intereſt

tereſt of thoſe who teach to have ſcholars; and this is the caſe in our Univerſities. That they are rich is certainly not true; for they have nothing good enough to keep a man of eminent learning with them for his life. In the foreign Univerſities a profeſſorſhip is a high thing. It is as much almoſt as a man can make by his learning; and therefore we find the moſt learned men abroad are in the Univerſities: it is not ſo with us. Our Univerſities are impoveriſhed of learning, by the penury of their proviſions. I wiſh there were many places of a thouſand a year at Oxford to keep firſt-rate men of learning from quitting the Univerſity."—Undoubtedly (remarks Mr. Boſwell) if this were the caſe, Literature would have a ſtill greater dignity and ſplendour at Oxford, and there would be grander living ſources of inſtruction.

A gentleman one day mentioned Mr. Maclaurin's uneaſineſs on account of a degree of ridicule careleſsly thrown on his deceaſed father, in Goldſmith's 'Hiſtory of Animated Nature," in which that celebrated mathematician is repreſented as being ſubject to fits of yawning ſo violent as to render him incapable of proceeding in his lecture; a ſtory altogether unfounded, but for the publication of which the law would give no reparation. This led the company

pany to agitate the queſtion, whether legal redreſs could be obtained, even when a man's deceaſed relation was calumniated in a publication. Mr. Murray maintained there ſhould be reparation, unleſs the author could juſtify himſelf by proving the fact.—JOHNSON. "Sir, it is of ſo much more conſequence that truth ſhould be told, than that individuals ſhould not be made uneaſy, that it is much better that the law does not reſtrain writing freely concerning the characters of the dead. Damages will be given to a man who is calumniated in his life-time, becauſe he may be hurt in his worldly intereſt, or at leaſt hurt in his mind. If a man could ſay nothing againſt a character but what he can prove, hiſtory could not be written; for a great deal is known of men of which proof cannot be brought. A miniſter may be notoriouſly known to take bribes, and yet you may not be able to prove it." Mr. Murray ſuggeſted, that the author ſhould be obliged to ſhow ſome ſort of evidence, though he would not require a ſtrict legal proof; but Johnſon firmly and reſolutely oppoſed any reſtraint whatever, as adverſe to a free inveſtigation of the characters of mankind.

Johnſon mentioned Dr. Barry's 'Syſtem of Phyſick.'—"He was a man (ſaid he) who had acquired a high reputation in Dublin, came over

over to England, and brought his reputation with him, but had no great ſucceſs. His notion was, that pulſation occaſions death by attrition; and that therefore the way to preſerve life is to retard pulſation. But we know that pulſation is ſtrongeſt in infants, and that we increaſe in growth while it operates in its regular courſe; ſo it cannot be the cauſe of deſtruction."

Talking of tranſlation, one ſaid, he could not define it, nor could he think of a ſimilitude to illuſtrate it; but that it appeared to him that tranſlation of poetry could be only imitation. Johnſon obſerved, "You may tranſlate books of ſcience exactly. You may alſo tranſlate hiſtory, in ſo far as it is not embelliſhed with oratory, which is poetical. Poetry, indeed, cannot be tranſlated; and, therefore, it is the poets that preſerve languages; for we would not be at the trouble to learn a language if we could have all that is written in it juſt as well in a tranſlation. But as the beauties of poetry cannot be preſerved in any language except that in which it was originally written, we learn the language."

A gentleman maintained that the art of printing had hurt real learning, by diſſeminating idle writings.—Johnſon ſaid, "Sir, if it had not been for the art of printing, we ſhould now have had no learning at all; for books would have

have periſhed faſter than they could have been tranſcribed." This obſervation ſeems not juſt, conſidering for how many ages books were preſerved by writing alone.

The ſame gentleman maintained, that a general diffuſion of knowledge among a people was a diſadvantage; for it made the vulgar riſe above their humble ſphere.—"Sir (ſaid Johnſon), while knowledge is a diſtinction, thoſe who are poſſeſſed of it will naturally riſe above thoſe who are not. Merely to read and write was a diſtinction at firſt; but we ſee when reading and writing have become general, the common people keep their ſtations. And ſo, were higher attainments to become general, the effect would be the ſame."

He ſaid, that for general improvement, a man ſhould read whatever his immediate inclination prompts him to; though, to be ſure, if a man has a ſcience to learn, he muſt regularly and reſolutely advance. He added, "what we read with inclination makes a much ſtronger impreſſion. If we read without inclination, half the mind is employed in fixing the attention; ſo there is but one half to be employed on what we read." He ſaid, he read Fielding's 'Amelia' through without ſtopping.—"If a man (ſaid he) begins to read in the middle of a book, and feels an inclination to go on, let him not

quit it to go to the beginning. He may perhaps not feel again the inclination."

It having been mentioned, that a certain female political writer, whoſe doctrines he diſliked, had of late become very fond of dreſs, ſat hours together at her toilet, and even put on rouge, Johnſon ſaid, "She is better employed at her toilet than uſing her pen. It is better ſhe ſhould be reddening her own cheeks, than blackening other people's characters."

Mr. Boſwell tells us, that a clergyman had come to ſubmit ſome poetical pieces to Johnſon's reviſion. "It is wonderful (ſays Mr. B.) what a number and variety of writers, ſome of them even unknown to him, prevailed on his good nature to look over their works, and ſuggeſt corrections and improvements. My arrival interrupted for a little while the important buſineſs of this true repreſentative of Bayes; upon its being reſumed, I found that the ſubject under immediate conſideration was a tranſlation, yet in manuſcript, of the 'Carmen Seculare' of Horace, which had this year been ſet to muſic, and performed as a public entertainment in London, for the joint benefit of Monſieur Philidor and Signor Baretti. When Johnſon had done reading, the author aſked him bluntly, "If upon the whole it was a good tranſlation?" Johnſon, whoſe regard for truth was uncommonly

monly ſtrict, ſeemed to be puzzled for a moment what anſwer to make, as he certainly could not honeſtly commend the performance: with exquiſite addreſs he evaded the queſtion thus: "Sir, I do not ſay that it may not be made a very good tranſlation." Here nothing whatever in favour of the performance was affirmed, and yet the writer was not ſhocked. A printed 'Ode to the Warlike Genius of Britain' came next in review: the bard was a lank bony figure, with ſhort black hair; he was writhing with agitation while Johnſon read, and ſhewing his teeth in a grin of earneſtneſs, exclaimed in broken ſentences, and in a keen ſharp tone, "Is that poetry, Sir?—Is it Pindar?"—JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, there is here a great deal of what is called poetry." Then turning to me the poet cried, "My muſe has not been long upon the town, and (pointing to the Ode) it trembles under the hand of the great critic." Johnſon, in a tone of diſpleaſure, aſked him, "Why do you praiſe Anſon?" I did not trouble him by aſking his reaſon for this queſtion. He proceeded, "Here is an error, Sir; you have made Genius feminine."—"Palpable, Sir (cried the enthuſiaſt); I know it. But (in a lower tone) it was to pay a compliment to the Ducheſs of Devonſhire, with which her Grace was pleaſed. She is walking acroſs Coxheath, in the military uniform, and I

ſuppoſe

ſuppoſe her to be the Genius of Britain."—JOHNSON. "Sir, you are giving a reaſon for it; but that will not make it right. You may have a reaſon why two and two ſhould make five; but they will ſtill make but four."

Mr. Boſwell having once regretted to Johnſon that he had learnt little Greek, as is too generally the caſe in Scotland; that he had for a long time hardly applied at all to the ſtudy of that noble language, he was deſirous of being told by him what method to follow; he recommended as eaſy helps, Sylvanus's 'Firſt Book of the Iliad;' Dawſon's 'Lexicon to the Greek New Teſtament;' and 'Heſiod,' with *Paſoris Lexicon* at the end of it."

One night at the CLUB a tranſlation of an Epitaph was produced which Lord Elibank had written in Engliſh for his Lady, and requeſted of Johnſon to turn into Latin for him. Having read *Domina de North et Gray*, he ſaid to Mr. Dyer, "You ſee, Sir, what barbariſms we are compelled to make uſe of when modern titles are to be ſpecifically mentioned in Latin inſcriptions." When he had read it once aloud, and there had been a general approbation expreſſed by the company, he addreſſed himſelf to Mr. Dyer in particular, and ſaid, "Sir, I beg to have your judgment; for I know your nicety." Dyer then very properly deſired to

read

read it over again; which having done, he pointed out an incongruity in one of the ſentences. Johnſon immediately aſſented to the obſervation, and ſaid, "Sir, this is owing to an alteration of a part of the ſentence, from the form in which I had firſt written it; and I believe, Sir, you may have remarked, that it is a very frequent cauſe of error in compoſition, when one has made a partial change, without a due regard to the general ſtructure of the ſentence."

Johnſon was well acquainted with Mr. Doſſie, author of a treatiſe on Agriculture; and ſaid of him, "Of the objects which the Society of Arts have chiefly in view, the chymical effects of bodies operating upon other bodies, he knows more than almoſt any man." Johnſon, in order to give Mr. Doſſie his vote to be a member of this Society, paid up an arrear which had run on for two years. On this occaſion he mentioned a circumſtance, as characteriſtic of the Scotch. "One of that nation (ſaid he) who had been a candidate, againſt whom I had voted, came up to me with a civil ſalutation.—Now, Sir, this is their way. An Engliſhman would have ſtomached it, and been ſulky, and never have taken further notice of you; but a Scotchman, Sir, though you vote nineteen times againſt him, will accoſt you with equal com-

plaiſance after each time; and the twentieth time, Sir, he will get your vote."

His diſtinction of the different degrees of attainment of learning was thus marked upon two occaſions. Of Queen Elizabeth he ſaid, "She had learning enough to have given dignity to a biſhop;" and of Mr. Thomas Davies he ſaid, "Sir, Davies has learning enough to give credit to a clergyman."

He uſed to quote with great warmth the ſaying of Ariſtotle recorded by Diogenes Laertius; "that there was the ſame difference between one learned and unlearned, as between the living and the dead."

"Spaniſh plays (he obſerved), being wildly and improbably farcical, would pleaſe children here, as children are entertained with ſtories full of prodigies; their experience not being ſufficient to cauſe them to be ſo readily ſtartled at deviations from the natural courſe of life.—The machinery of the Pagans is unintereſting to us: when a goddeſs appears in Homer or Virgil, we grow weary; ſtill more ſo in the Grecian tragedies, as in that kind of compoſition a nearer approach to nature is intended. Yet there are good reaſons for reading romances; as—the fertility of invention, the beauty of ſtile and expreſſion, the curioſity of ſeeing with what kind of performances the age and

and country in which they were written was delighted; for it is to be apprehended, that at the time when very wild improbable tales were well received, the people were in a barbarous ſtate, and ſo on the footing of children, as has been explained.

"It is evident enough that no one who writes now can uſe the Pagan deities and mythology; the only machinery, therefore, ſeems that of miniſtring ſpirits, the ghoſts of the departed, witches, and fairies; though theſe latter, as the vulgar ſuperſtition concerning them (which, while in its force, infected at leaſt the imagination of thoſe that had more advantage in education, though their reaſon ſet them free from it) is every day wearing out, ſeem likely to be of little further aſſiſtance in the machinery of poetry. As I recollect, Hammond introduces a hag or witch into one of his love elegies, where the effect is unmeaning and diſguſting."

Of ridicule he obſerved, "The man who in converſation uſes his talent of ridicule in creating or groſsly exaggerating the inſtances he gives, who imputes abſurdities that did not happen, or when a man was a little ridiculous, deſcribes him as having been very much ſo, abuſes his talents greatly. The great uſe of delineating abſurdities is, that we may know

how far human folly can go; the account, therefore, ought of abſolute neceſſity to be faithful. A certain character (naming the perſon), as to the general caſt of it, is well deſcribed by Garrick; but a great deal of the phraſeology he uſes in it is quite his own, particularly in the proverbial compariſons, 'obſtinate as a pig,' &c.; but I don't know whether it might not be true of Lord ——, that from a too great eagerneſs for praiſe and popularity, and a politeneſs carried to a ridiculous exceſs, he was likely, after aſſerting a thing in general, to give it up again in parts. For inſtance, if he had ſaid Reynolds was the firſt of painters, he was capable enough of giving up, as objections might happen to be ſeverally made, firſt, his outline,—then the grace in form,—then the colouring,—and laſtly, to have owned that he was ſuch a mannerift, that the diſpoſition of his pictures were all alike."

A gentleman, by no means deficient in literature, having diſcovered leſs acquaintance with one of the claſſics than Johnſon expected, when the gentleman left the room, he obſerved, "You ſee, now, how little any body reads."—Mr. Langton happening to mention his having read a good deal in Clenardus's Greek Grammar, "Why, Sir (ſaid he), who is there in this town that knows any thing of Clenardus but

but you and I?" And upon Mr. Langton's mentioning that he had taken the pains to learn by heart the Epiſtle of St. Baſil, which is given in that Grammar as a praxis, "Sir (ſaid he), I never made ſuch an effort to attain Greek."

He had a ſtrong prejudice againſt the political character of Secker, one inſtance of which appeared at Oxford, when he expreſſed great diſſatisfaction at his varying the old eſtabliſhed toaſt, 'Church and King.'—"The Archbiſhop of Canterbury, ſaid he (with an affected ſmooth ſmiling grimace), drinks, 'Conſtitution in Church and State.' Being aſked what difference there was between the two toaſts, he ſaid, 'Why, Sir, you may be ſure he meant ſomething.' Yet when the life of that prelate, prefixed to his ſermons by Dr. Porteus and Dr. Stinton, his chaplains, firſt came out, he read it with the utmoſt avidity, and ſaid, "It is a life well written, and that well deſerves to be recorded."

Of Sir Joſhua Reynolds he ſaid, "I know no man who has paſſed through life with more obſervation than Reynolds."

Once when ſomebody produced a newſpaper in which there was a letter of ſtupid abuſe of Sir Joſhua Reynolds, in which Johnſon himſelf came in for a ſhare,—"Pray (ſaid

he) let us have it read aloud from beginning to end;" which being done, he with a ludicrous earneſtneſs, and not directing his look to any particular perſon, called out, "Are we alive after all this ſatire!"

Talking of the difference between the mode of education at Oxford, and that in thoſe Colleges where inſtruction is chiefly conveyed by lectures, Johnſon obſerved, "Lectures were once uſeful; but now, when all can read, and books are ſo numerous, lectures are unneceſſary. If your attention fails, and you miſs a part of a lecture, it is loſt; you cannot go back as you do upon a book." Dr. Scott agreed with him. "But yet, Dr. Scott (ſaid Mr. B.), you yourſelf gave lectures at Oxford." The Doctor ſmiled. "You laughed then (ſaid Mr. B.) at thoſe who came to you."

Talking of celebrated and ſucceſsful irregular practiſers in phyſic, Johnſon ſaid, "Taylor was the moſt ignorant man I ever knew, but ſprightly. Ward the dulleſt. Taylor challenged me once to talk Latin with him: (laughing). I quoted ſome of Horace, which he took to be a part of my own ſpeech. He ſaid a few words well enough."—BEAUCLERK. "I remember, Sir, you ſaid that Taylor was an inſtance how far impudence could carry ignorance." Mr. Beauclerk told a number of ſhort

ſtories

ſtories in a lively elegant manner, and with that air of *the world* which has a ſort of impreſſive effect, as if there were ſomething more than is expreſſed, or than perhaps we could perfectly underſtand. As Johnſon accompanied Sir Joſhua Reynolds home in his coach, he ſaid, "There is in Beauclerk a predominance over his company that one does not like. But he is a man who has lived ſo much in the world, that he has a ſhort ſtory on every occaſion; he is always ready to talk, and is never exhauſted."

His affection, however, for Topham Beauclerk was ſo great, that when that gentleman was labouring under the ſevere illneſs which at laſt occaſioned his death, Johnſon ſaid, (with a voice faultering with emotion), "Sir, I would walk to the extent of the diameter of the earth to ſave Beauclerk."

Mr. Beauclerk's great library was after his death ſold in London by auction. Mr. Wilkes ſaid, he wondered to find in it ſuch a numerous collection of ſermons, ſeeming to think it ſtrange that a gentleman of Mr. Beauclerk's character in the gay world, ſhould have choſen to have many compoſitions of that kind.—"Why, Sir (ſaid Johnſon), you are to conſider, that ſermons make a conſiderable branch of Engliſh literature; ſo that a library muſt be very imperfect if it has not a numerous collec-

tion of ſermons; and in all collections, Sir, the deſire of augmenting it grows ſtronger in proportion to the advance in acquiſition; as motion is accelerated by the continuance of the *impetus*. Beſides, Sir (looking at Mr. Wilkes with a placid but ſignificant ſmile), a man may collect ſermons with intention of making himſelf better by them. I hope Mr. Beauclerk intended, that ſome time or other that ſhould be the caſe with him."

Sir John Pringle had expreſſed a wiſh to have Dr. Johnſon's opinion what were the beſt Engliſh ſermons for ſtyle. Mr. B. one day took an opportunity of mentioning ſeveral to him. *Atterbury*?—JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, one of the beſt. — BOSWELL. "*Tillotſon*?"—*J.* "Why not now. I ſhould not adviſe a preacher at this day to imitate Tillotſon's ſtyle; though I don't know; I ſhould be cautious of objecting to what has been applauded by ſo many ſuffrages.—*South* is one of the beſt, if you except his peculiarities, and his violence, and ſometimes coarſeneſs of language. *Seed* has a very fine ſtyle; but he is not very theological.—*Jortin's* ſermons are very elegant.—*Sherlock's* ſtyle too is very elegant, though he has not made it his principal ſtudy. And you may add *Smallridge*. All the latter preachers have a good ſtyle. Indeed, nobody now talks much

much of ſtyle: every body compoſes pretty well. There are no ſuch unharmonious periods as there were a hundred years ago. I ſhould recommend *Dr. Clarke's* ſermons, were he orthodox. However, it is very well known *where* he was not orthodox, which was upon the doctrine of the Trinity, as to which he is a condemned heretic; ſo one is aware of it."—*B.* "I like Ogden's ſermons on prayer very much, both for neatneſs of ſtyle and ſubtilty of reaſoning."—*J.* "I ſhould like to read all that Ogden has written."—*B.* "What I wiſh to know is, what ſermons afford the beſt ſpecimen of Engliſh pulpit eloquence."—*J.* "We have no ſermons addreſſed to the paſſions that are good for any thing; if you mean that kind of eloquence."—A CLERGYMAN (whoſe name I do not recollect) aſked, "Were not Dodd's ſermons addreſſed to the paſſions?"—*J.* "They were nothing, Sir, be they addreſſed to what they may."

Sir Joſhua Reynolds praiſed "Mudge's Sermons."—JOHNSON. "Mudge's Sermons are good, but not practical. He graſps more ſenſe than he can hold; he takes more corn than he can make into meal; he opens a wide proſpect, but ſo diſtant, that it is indiſtinct. I love 'Blair's Sermons.' Though the dog is a Scotchman, and a Preſbyterian, and every thing he ſhould not

not be, I was the firſt to praiſe them. Such was my candour (ſmiling)."—MRS. BOSCAWEN. "Such his great merit to get the better of all your prejudices."—*J.* "Why, Madam, let us compound the matter; let us aſcribe it to my candour and his merit."

Somebody obſerved, that the life of a mere literary man could not be very entertaining.—Johnſon ſaid, "But it certainly may. This is a remark which has been made and repeated without juſtice. Why ſhould the life of a literary man be leſs entertaining than the life of any other man? Are there not as intereſting varieties in ſuch a life? As *a literary life* it may be very entertaining."—BOSWELL. "But it muſt be better ſurely, when it is diverſified with a little active variety—ſuch as his having gone to Jamaica; or, his having gone to the Hebrides." Johnſon was not diſpleaſed at this.

Speaking of a certain literary friend, "He is a very pompous puzzling fellow (ſaid he), he lent me a letter once that ſomebody had written to him, no matter what it was about; but he wanted to have the letter back, and expreſſed a mighty value for it; he hoped it was to be met with again, he would not loſe it for a thouſand pounds. I laid my hand upon it ſoon afterwards, and gave it him. I believe I ſaid, I was very glad to have met with it. O, then he did

not know that it ſignified any thing. So you ſee, when the letter was loſt it was worth a thouſand pounds, and when it was found it was not worth a farthing."

An author of moſt anxious and reſtleſs vanity being mentioned, "Sir (ſaid he), there is not a young ſapling upon Parnaſſus more ſeverely blown about by every wind of criticiſm than that poor fellow."

Talking of a certain clergyman of extraordinary character, who by exerting his talents in writing on temporary topics, and diſplaying uncommon boldneſs, had raiſed himſelf to affluence, a gentleman maintained that they ought not to be indignant at his ſucceſs; for merit of every ſort was entitled to reward.—"Sir (ſaid Johnſon), I will not allow this man to have merit. No, Sir; what he has is rather the contrary; I will, indeed, allow him courage, and on this account we ſo far give him credit. We have more reſpect for a man who robs boldly on the highway, than for a fellow who jumps out of a ditch, and knocks you down behind your back. Courage is a quality ſo neceſſary for maintaining virtue, that it is always reſpected, even when it is aſſociated with vice."

Johnſon was by no means of opinion, that every man of a learned profeſſion ſhould conſider

der it as incumbent upon him, or as neceſſary to his credit, to appear as an author. When, in the ardour of ambition for literary fame, I regretted to him one day that an eminent Judge had nothing of it, and therefore would leave no perpetual monument of himſelf to poſterity, "Alas, Sir (ſaid Johnſon), what a maſs of confuſion ſhould we have, if every Biſhop and every Judge, every Lawyer, Phyſician, and Divine, were to write books."

At another time he ſaid, "I was angry with Hurd about Cowley, for having publiſhed a ſelection of his works; but upon better conſideration, I think there is no impropriety in a man's publiſhing as much as he chooſes of any author, if he does not put the reſt out of the way. A man, for inſtance, may print the Odes of Horace alone."

Talking of thoſe writers who had affected to imitate his ſtyle, Johnſon ſaid, "The imitators of my ſtile have not hit it. Miſs Aikin has done it beſt; for ſhe has imitated the ſentiment as well as the diction."

He obſerved, that a gentleman of eminence in literature had got into a bad ſtyle of poetry of late. "He puts (ſaid he) a very common thing in a ſtrange dreſs till he does not know it himſelf, and thinks other people do not know it."—BOSWELL. "That is owing to his being

ſo

ſo much verſant in old Engliſh Poetry.—JOHNSON. "What is that to the purpoſe, Sir? If I ſay a man is drunk, and you tell me it is owing to his taking ſo much drink, the matter is not mended. No, Sir, ****** has taken to an odd mode. For example; he'd write thus:

"Hermit hoar, in ſolemn cell,
"Wearing out life's evening gray."

Gray evening is common enough; but *evening gray* he'd think fine.—Stay;—we'll make out the ſtanza:

"Hermit hoar, in ſolemn cell,
"Wearing out life's evening gray;
"Smite thy boſom, ſage, and tell,
"What is bliſs? and which the way?"

BOSWELL. "But why ſmite his boſom, Sir?" JOHNSON. "Why to ſhew he was in earneſt." (ſmiling). Johnſon at an after period added the following ſtanza:

"Thus I ſpoke; and ſpeaking ſigh'd;
"Scarce repreſs'd the ſtarting tear;
"When the ſmiling ſage replied,
"Come, my lad, and drink ſome beer."

Speaking of a collection being made of all the Engliſh Poets who had publiſhed a volume of

of poems, Johnſon ſaid, that a "Mr. Coxeter, whom he knew, had gone the greateſt length towards this; having collected about five hundred volumes of poets whoſe works were little known; but that upon his death Tom Oſborne bought them, and they were diſperſed, which he thought a pity, as it was curious to ſee any ſeries complete; and in every volume of poems ſomething good may be found."

In his review of Warton's 'Eſſay on the Writings and Genius of Pope,' Johnſon has given the following ſalutary caution:—"Nothing but experience could evince the frequency of falſe information, or enable any man to conceive that ſo many groundleſs reports ſhould be propagated, as every man of eminence may hear of himſelf. Some men relate what they think as what they know; ſome men of confuſed memories and habitual inaccuracy, aſcribe to one man what belongs to another; and ſome talk on, without thought or care. A few men are ſufficient to broach falſehoods which are afterwards innocently diffuſed by ſucceſſive relaters."—"Had he lived (obſerves Mr. Boſwell) to read what Sir John Hawkins and Mrs. Piozzi have related concerning himſelf, how much would he have found his obſervation illuſtrated. He was indeed ſo much impreſſed with the prevalence of falſehood, voluntary or unintentional,

tional, that I never knew any perſon who upon hearing an extraordinary circumſtance told, diſcovered more of the *incredulus odi.* He would ſay, with a ſignificant look and deciſive tone, 'It is not ſo. Do not tell this again.'—He inculcated upon all his friends the importance of perpetual vigilance againſt the ſlighteſt degrees of falſehood; the effect of which, as Sir Joſhua Reynolds obſerved to me, has been, that all who were of his *ſchool* are diſtinguiſhed for a love of truth and accuracy, which they would not have poſſeſſed in the ſame degree if they had not been known to Johnſon."

Talking of the great difficulty of obtaining authentic information for biography, Johnſon ſaid, "When I was a young fellow I wanted to write the 'Life of Dryden,' and in order to get materials, I applied to the only two perſons then alive who had ſeen him; theſe were old Swinney and old Cibber. Swinney's information was no more than this, 'That at Will's coffee-houſe Dryden had a particular chair for himſelf, which was ſet by the fire in winter, and was then called his winter-chair; and that it was carried out for him to the balcony in ſummer, and was then called his ſummer-chair.' Cibber could tell no more but 'That he remembered him a decent old man, arbiter of critical diſputes at Will's.' You are to conſider

ſider that Cibber was then at a great diſtance from Dryden; had perhaps one leg only in the room, and durſt not draw in the other."

Mr. Boſwell ſaid, in writing a life a man's peculiarities ſhould be mentioned becauſe they mark his character.—JOHNSON. "Sir, there is no doubt as to peculiarities: the queſtion is, whether a man's vices ſhould be mentioned;—for inſtance, whether it ſhould be mentioned that Addiſon and Parnell drank too freely; for people will probably more eaſily indulge in drinking from knowing this; ſo that more ill may be done by the example, than good by telling the whole truth. Here was an inſtance of his varying from himſelf in talk; for on a former occaſion he had maintained, that "If a man is to write *A Panegyric* he may keep vices out of ſight; but if he profeſſes to write *A Life* he muſt repreſent it really as it was;" and when a perſon objected to the danger of telling that Parnell drank to exceſs, he ſaid, that "it would produce an inſtructive caution to avoid drinking, when it was ſeen, that even the learning and genius of Parnell could be debaſed by it." In the Hebrides he maintained, as appears from Mr. Boſwell's 'Journal,' that a man's intimate friend ſhould mention his faults, if he writes his life.

"The

" The writer of an epitaph (he obſerved) ſhould not be conſidered as ſaying nothing but what is ſtrictly true. Allowance muſt be made for ſome degree of exaggerated praiſe. In lapidary inſcriptions a man is not upon oath."

At another time, when ſomebody endeavoured to argue in favour of the Epitaph for Goldſmith's tablet in Weſtminſter Abbey being in Engliſh, Johnſon ſaid, " The language of the country of which a learned man was a native is not the language fit for his epitaph, which ſhould be in ancient and permanent language. Conſider, Sir; how you ſhould feel, were you to find at Rotterdam an epitaph upon Eraſmus in Dutch!" Mr. Boſwell thought it would be beſt to have epitaphs written both in a learned language, and in the language of the country; ſo that they might have the advantage of being more univerſally underſtood, and at the ſame time be ſecured of claſſical ſtability.

A gentleman aſking Johnſon whether he would adviſe him to read the Bible with a commentary, and what commentaries he would recommend, Johnſon ſaid, " To be ſure, Sir, I would have you read the Bible with a commentary; and I would recommend Lowth and Patrick on the Old Teſtament, and Hammond on the New."

Speaking one day of Arthur Murphy, whom he very much loved, "I don't know (ſaid he) that Arthur can be claſſed with the very firſt dramatic writers; yet at preſent I doubt much whether we have any thing ſuperior to Arthur."

A lady's verſes on Ireland being mentioned, Miſs Reynolds ſaid, "Have you ſeen them, Sir?"—JOHNSON. "No, Madam. I have ſeen a tranſlation from Horace by one of her daughters. She ſhewed it me."—MISS REYNOLDS. "And how was it, Sir?"—*J.* "Why, very well for a young Miſs's verſe;—that is to ſay, compared with excellence, nothing; but very well for the perſon who wrote them. I am vexed at being ſhewn verſes in that manner."—Miſs *R.* "But if they ſhould be good, why not give them hearty praiſe?"—*J.* "Why, Madam, becauſe I have not then got the better of my bad humour from having been ſhewn them. You muſt conſider, Madam; before-hand they may be bad as well as good. Nobody has a right to put another under ſuch a difficulty, that he muſt either hurt the perſon by telling the truth, or hurt himſelf by telling what is not true."—BOSWELL. "A man often ſhews his writings to people of eminence to obtain from them, either from their good nature, or from their not being able to tell the truth

truth firmly, a commendation of which he may afterwards avail himſelf."—*J.* "Very true, Sir. Therefore the man who is aſked by an author what he thinks of his work, is put to the torture, and is not obliged to ſpeak the truth; ſo that what he ſays is not conſidered as his opinion; yet he has ſaid it, and cannot retract it; and this author, when mankind are hunting him with a canniſter at his tail, can ſay, "I would not have publiſhed, had not Johnſon, or Reynolds, or Muſgrave, or ſome other good judge, commended the work.' Yet I conſider it as a very difficult queſtion in conſcience, whether one ſhould adviſe a man not to publiſh a work, if profit be his object; for the man may ſay, 'Had it not been for you, I ſhould have had the money.' Now you cannot be ſure; for you have only your own opinion, and the public may think very differently."—SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS. "You muſt upon ſuch an occaſion have two judgments; one as to the real value of the work, the other as to what may pleaſe the general taſte at the time,"—*J.* "But you can be *ſure* of neither; and therefore I ſhould ſcruple much to give a ſuppreſſive vote. Both Goldſmith's comedies were once refuſed; his firſt by Garrick, his ſecond by Colman, who was prevailed on at laſt by much ſolicitation, nay a

kind of force, to bring it on. His 'Vicar of Wakefield' I myſelf did not think would have had much ſucceſs. It was written, and ſold to a bookſeller before his 'Traveller;' but publiſhed after; ſo little expectation had the bookſeller from it. Had it been ſold after the 'Traveller,' he might have had twice as much money for it, though ſixty guineas was no mean price. The bookſeller had the advantage of Goldſmith's reputation from 'The Traveller' in the ſale, though Goldſmith had it not in ſelling the copy."—*Sir J. R.* "The Beggar's Opera affords a proof how ſtrangely people will differ in opinion about a literary performance. Burke thinks it has no merit."—*J.* "It was refuſed by one of the houſes; but I ſhould have thought it would ſucceed, not from any great excellence in the writing, but from the novelty, and the general ſpirit and gaiety of the piece, which keeps the audience always attentive, and diſmiſſes them in good humour."

He once mentioned with an air of ſatisfaction what Baretti had told him; that meeting, in the courſe of his ſtudying Engliſh, with an excellent paper in the Spectator, one of four that were written by the reſpectable diſſenting miniſter Mr. Grove of Taunton, and obſerving the genius and energy of mind that it exhibits,

hibits, it greatly quickened his curioſity to viſit our country; as he thought if ſuch were the lighter periodical eſſays of our authors, their productions on more weighty occaſions muſt be wonderful indeed.

Mr. Boſwell expreſſed a liking for Mr. Francis Oſborn's works, and aſked Johnſon what he thought of that writer. He anſwered, "A conceited fellow. Were a man to write ſo now, the boys would throw ſtones at him." He however (ſays Mr. B.) did not alter my opinion of a favourite author, to whom I was firſt directed by his being quoted in 'The Spectator,' and in whom I have found much ſhrewd and lively ſenſe, expreſſed indeed in a ſtyle ſomewhat quaint, which however I do not diſlike. His book has an air of originality. We figure to ourſelves an ancient gentleman talking to us.

Johnſon once talked with approbation of an intended edition of 'The Spectator' with notes; two volumes of which had been prepared by a gentleman eminent in the literary world, and the materials which he had collected for the remainder had been transferred to another hand. He obſerved, that all works which deſcribe manners require notes in ſixty or ſeventy years or leſs; and ſaid, he had communicated all he knew that could throw light upon 'The Spectator.'

tator.' He ſaid, "Addiſon had made his Sir Andrew Freeport a true Whig, arguing againſt giving charity to beggars, and throwing out other ſuch ungracious ſentiments; but that he had thought better, and made amends by making him found an hoſpital for decayed farmers." He called for the volume of 'The Spectator' in which that account is contained, and read it aloud. Indeed he read ſo well, that every thing acquired additional weight and grace from his utterance.

Johnſon on another occaſion praiſed 'The Spectator,' particularly the character of Sir Roger de Coverley. He ſaid, "Sir Roger did not die a violent death as has been generally fancied. He was not killed; he died only becauſe others were to die, and becauſe his death afforded an opportunity to Addiſon for ſome very fine writing. We have the example of Cervantes making Don Quixote die. I never could ſee why Sir Roger is repreſented as a little cracked. It appears to me that the ſtory of the widow was intended to have ſomething ſuperinduced upon it; but the ſuperſtructure did not come."

Johnſon talked of its having been ſaid that Addiſon wrote ſome of his beſt papers in 'The Spectator' when warm with wine. He did not ſeem willing to admit this. Dr. Scott, as a confir-

a confirmation of it, related, that Blackſtone, a ſober man, compoſed his 'Commentaries' with a bottle of port before him; and found his mind invigorated and ſupported in the fatigue of his great work, by a temperate uſe of it.

In another converſation on 'The Spectator,' he ſaid, "It is wonderful that there is ſuch a proportion of bad papers, in the half of the work which was not written by Addiſon; for there was all the world to write that half, yet not a half of that half is good. One of the fineſt pieces in the Engliſh language is the paper on Novelty, yet we do not hear it talked of. It was written by Mr. Grove, a diſſenting teacher. Mr. Murphy ſaid, he remembered when there were ſeveral people alive in London, who enjoyed a conſiderable reputation merely from having written a paper in 'The Spectator.' He mentioned particularly Mr. Ince, who uſed to frequent Tom's coffee-houſe; "but (ſaid Johnſon) you muſt conſider how highly Steele ſpeaks of Mr. Ince." He would not allow that the paper on carrying a boy to travel, ſigned *Philip Homebred*, which was reported to be written by the Lord Chancellor Hardwick, had merit. He ſaid, "It was quite vulgar, and had nothing luminous."

A gentleman mentioned Sir Richard Steele having publiſhed his 'Chriſtian Hero' with the avowed purpoſe of obliging himſelf to lead a religious life, yet that his conduct was by no means ſtrictly ſuitable. JOHNSON. "Steele, I believe, practiſed the lighter vices."

A deſire was expreſſed to know his authority for the ſtory of Addiſon's ſending an execution into Steele's houſe. "Sir (ſaid he), it is generally known, it is known to all who are acquainted with the literary hiſtory of that period. It is as well known, as that he wrote 'Cato.' Mr. Thomas Sheridan once defended Addiſon, by alledging that he did it in order to cover Steele's goods from other creditors, who were going to ſeize them."

Johnſon ſaid, that "Addiſon wrote Budgell's papers in the Spectator, at leaſt mended them ſo much, that he made them almoſt his own; and that Draper, Tonſon's partner, aſſured Mrs. Johnſon, that the much admired Epilogue to 'The Diſtreſſed Mother,' which came out in Budgell's name, was in reality written by Addiſon."

Mr. Eliot, with whom Dr. Walter Harte had travelled, talked of Harte's 'Hiſtory of Guſtavus Adolpus,' which he ſaid was a very good book in the German tranſlation. Johnſon ſaid, "Harte was exceſſively vain: he put copies

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of his book in manuſcript into the hands of Lord Cheſterfield and Lord Granville, that they might reviſe it. Now how abſurd was it to ſuppoſe that two ſuch noblemen would reviſe ſo big a manuſcript. Poor man! he left London the day of the publication of his book, that he might be out of the way of the great praiſe he was to receive; and he was aſhamed to return, when he found how ill his book had ſucceeded. It was unlucky in coming out on the ſame day with Robertſon's 'Hiſtory of Scotland.' His huſbandry, however, is good." Boswell. "So he was fitter for that than heroick hiſtory. He did well when he turned his ſword into a plough-ſhare." Johnſon at another time much commended Harte as a ſcholar, and a man of the moſt companionable talents he had ever known. He ſaid, the defects in his hiſtory proceeded not from imbecillity, but from foppery.

Berkeley, he ſaid, was a profound ſcholar, as well as a man of fine imagination; but Uſher was the great luminary of the Iriſh church; and a greater, he added, no church could boaſt of; at leaſt in modern times.

Bayle's Dictionary, he obſerved, was a very uſeful work for thoſe to conſult who love the biographical part of literature, which was what he loved moſt.

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He ſaid, he had looked into the poems of a pretty voluminous writer, Mr. (now Dr.) John Ogilvie, one of the Preſbyterian miniſters of Scotland, which had lately come out, but could find no thinking in them. Mr. Boſwell aſked, "Is there not imagination in them, Sir?"—JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, there is in them what *was* imagination, but it is no more imagination in *him*, than ſound is found in the echo; and his diction too is not his own. We have long ago ſeen *white-robed innocence*, and *flower-beſpangled meads*."

Talking of the eminent writers in Queen Anne's reign, he obſerved, "I think Dr. Arbuthnot the firſt man among them. He was the moſt univerſal genius, being an excellent phyſician, a man of deep learning, and a man of much humour. Mr. Addiſon was, to be ſure, a great man; his learning was not profound, but his morality, his humour, and his elegance of writing, ſet him very high."

He enlarged very convincingly upon the excellence of rhyme over blank verſe in Engliſh poetry. Mr. Boſwell mentioned to him that Dr. Adam Smith, in his Lectures upon Compoſition, when he ſtudied under him in the College of Glaſgow, had maintained the ſame opinion ſtrenuouſly, and Mr. B. repeated ſome of his arguments. Johnſon ſaid, "Sir, I was

once in company with Smith, and we did not take to each other; but had I known that he loved rhyme as much as you tell me he does, I ſhould have hugged him."

Mr. B. mentioned Dr. Adam Smith's book on 'The Wealth of Nations,' which was juſt publiſhed, and that Sir John Pringle had obſerved to him, that Dr. Smith, who had never been in trade, could not be expected to write well on that ſubject any more than a lawyer upon phyſick. Johnſon ſaid, "He is miſtaken, Sir; a man who has never been engaged in trade himſelf may undoubtedly write well upon trade, and there is nothing which requires more to be illuſtrated by philoſophy than trade does. As to mere wealth, that is to ſay money, it is clear that one nation or one individual cannot increaſe its ſtore but by making another poorer; but trade procures what is more valuable, the reciprocation of the peculiar advantages of different countries. A merchant ſeldom thinks but of his own particular trade. To write a good book upon it, a man muſt have extenſive views. It is not neceſſary to have practiſed, to write well upon a ſubject."

Law was mentioned as a ſubject on which no man could write well without practice. JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, in England, where ſo much money is to be got by the practice of the

the law, moſt of our writers upon it have been in practice; though Blackſtone had not been much in practice when he publiſhed his 'Commentaries.' But upon the Continent, the great writers on law have not all been in practice: Grotius indeed was; but Puffendorf was not; Burlamaqui was not."

Sir Thomas Robinſon, ſitting with Johnſon one day, obſerved, that the King of Pruſſia valued himſelf upon three things:—upon being a hero, a muſician, and an author. "Pretty well, Sir (ſaid Johnſon), for one man. As to his being an author, I have not looked at his poetry; but his proſe is poor ſtuff. He writes juſt as you might ſuppoſe Voltaire's footboy to do, who has been his amanuenſis. He has ſuch parts as the valet might have, and about as much of the colouring of the ſtyle as might be got by tranſcribing his works."

The ballad of Hardyknute (he ſaid) had no great merit, if it were really ancient. "People talk of nature; but mere obvious nature may be exhibited with very little power of mind."

Johnſon thought the poems publiſhed as tranſlations from Oſſian had ſo little merit, that he ſaid, "Sir, a man might write ſuch ſtuff for ever, if he would *abandon* his mind to it." Johnſon had all along denied their authenti-

city; and, what was ſtill more provoking to their admirers, maintained that they had no merit. The ſubject having been introduced by Dr. Fordyce, Dr. Blair, relying on the internal evidence of their antiquity, aſked Dr. Johnſon whether he thought any man of a modern age could have written ſuch poems? Johnſon replied, "Yes, Sir, many men, many women, and many children." Johnſon at this time did not know that Dr. Blair had juſt publiſhed a Diſſertation, not only defending their authenticity, but ſeriouſly ranking them with the poems of Homer and Virgil; and when he was afterwards informed of this circumſtance, he expreſſed ſome diſpleaſure at Dr. Fordyce's having ſuggeſted the topick, and ſaid, "I am not ſorry that they got thus much for their pains: Sir, it was like leading one to talk of a book, when the author is concealed behind the door." The poem of Fingal, he ſaid, was a mere unconnected rhapſody, a tireſome repetition of the ſame images. "In vain ſhall we look for the *lucidus ordo*, where there is neither end nor object, deſign nor moral, *nec certa recurrit imago*."

He much commended 'Law's Serious Call,' which he ſaid was the fineſt piece of hortatory theology in any language. "Law (ſaid he) fell latterly into the reveries of Jacob Behmen, whom

whom Law alledged to have been ſomewhat in the ſame ſtate with St. Paul, and to have ſeen *unutterable things*. Were it even ſo (ſaid Johnſon), Jacob would have reſembled St. Paul ſtill more, by not attempting to utter them."

Of Dr. Prieſtley's theological works, he remarked, that they tended to unſettle every thing, and yet ſettled nothing.

The converſation turning on critical ſubjects, Johnſon ſaid, "Bayes, in 'The Rehearſal,' is a mighty ſilly character. If it was intended to be like a particular man, it could only be diverting while that man was remembered; but I queſtion whether it was meant for Dryden, as has been reported; for we know ſome of the paſſages ſaid to be ridiculed were written ſince the 'Rehearſal;' at leaſt a paſſage mentioned in the Preface is of a later date." Mr. B. maintained that it had merit as a general ſatire on the ſelf-importance of dramatick authors. But even in this light he held it very cheap.

He ſeemed to take a pleaſure in ſpeaking in his own ſtyle; for ſometimes when he had careleſsly miſſed it, he would repeat the thought tranſlated into it. Talking of the Comedy of the 'Rehearſal,' he ſaid, "It has not wit enough to keep it ſweet." This was eaſy; he therefore caught himſelf, and pronounced a more

more rounded ſentence; "It has not vitality enough to preſerve it from putrefaction."

Hawkeſworth's compilation of the voyages to the South Sea being mentioned, Johnſon ſaid, "Sir, if you talk of it as a ſubject of commerce, it will be gainful; if as a book that is to increaſe human knowledge, I believe there will not be much of that. Hawkeſworth can tell only what the voyagers have told him; and they have found very little, only one new animal, I think."—BOSWELL. "But many inſects, Sir,"—JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, as to inſects, Ray reckons of Britiſh inſects twenty thouſand ſpecies. They might have ſtaid at home and diſcovered enough in that way."

The caſual mention of biography led to the mention of Dr. John Campbell, who had written a conſiderable part of the 'Biographia Britannica.' Johnſon, though he valued him highly, was of opinion that there was not ſo much in his great work, 'A Political Survey of Great Britain,' as the world had been taught to expect; and had formerly ſaid to Mr. Boſwell that he believed Campbell's diſappointment, on account of the bad ſucceſs of that work, had killed him. He now again obſerved of it, "That work was his death." Mr. Warton, who was preſent, not adverting to his meaning, anſwered, "I believe ſo; from the great attention

attention he beſtowed on it." JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, he died of *want* of attention, if he died at all by that book."

Again recurring to biography, Johnſon ſaid, "It is rarely well executed. They only who live with a man can write his life with any genuine exactneſs and diſcrimination; and few people who have lived with a man know what to remark about him. The chaplain of a late Biſhop, whom I was to aſſiſt in writing ſome memoirs of his Lordſhip, could tell me ſcarcely any thing."

A gentleman ſaid, Mr. Robert Dodſley's life ſhould be written, as he had been ſo much connected with the wits of his time, and by his literary merits had raiſed himſelf from the ſtation of a footman. Mr. Warton obſerved, that he had publiſhed a little volume under the title of 'The Muſe in Livery.' JOHNSON. "I doubt whether Dodſley's brother would thank a man who ſhould write his life; yet Dodſley himſelf was not unwilling that his original low condition ſhould be recollected. When Lord Lyttleton's 'Dialogues of the Dead' came out, one of which is between Apicius, an ancient epicure, and Dartineuf, a modern epicure, Dodſley ſaid to me, "I knew Dartineuf well, for I was once his footman."

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Of Dodſley's 'Publick Virtue,' a Poem, he ſaid, "It was fine *blank* (meaning to expreſs his uſual contempt for blank verſe); however, this miſerable poem did not ſell, and my poor friend Doddy ſaid, Public Virtue was not a ſubject to intereſt the age."

Mr. Langton, when a very young man, read Dodſley's 'Cleone, a Tragedy,' to Johnſon, not aware of his extreme impatience to be read to. As it went on, he turned his face to the back of his chair, and put himſelf into various attitudes which marked his uneaſineſs. At the end of an act, however, he ſaid, "Come, let's have ſome more, let's go into the ſlaughter-houſe again, Lanky; but I am afraid there is more blood than brains." Yet he afterwards ſaid, "When I heard you read it, I thought higher of its power of language. When I read it myſelf, I was more ſenſible of its pathetic effect, and then paid it a compliment which many will think very extravagant. 'Sir (ſaid he), if Otway had written this play, no other of his pieces would have been remembered.' Dodſley himſelf, upon this being repeated to him, ſaid, 'It was too much;' it muſt be remembered, that Johnſon always appeared not to be ſufficiently ſenſible of the merit of Otway."

Talking of Rocheſter's Poems, he ſaid, he had given them to Mr. Steevens to caſtrate for the edition of the Poets to which he was to write Prefaces. Dr. Taylor (the only time ſays Mr. B. I ever heard him ſay any thing witty) obſerved, that "If Rocheſter had been caſtrated himſelf, his exceptionable poems would not have been written." One aſked if Burnet had not given a good Life of Rocheſter. "We have (ſaid Johnſon) a good *Death*; there is not much *Life*."

He ſaid, "Burnet's 'Hiſtory of his own Times' is very entertaining. The ſtyle indeed is mere chit-chat. I do not believe that Burnet intentionally lied; but he was ſo much prejudiced, that he took no pains to find out the truth. He was like a man who reſolves to regulate his time by a certain watch; but will not enquire whether the watch is right or not."

Such was Johnſon's ſenſibility, and ſo much was he affected by pathetick poetry, that the reading of Dr. Beattie's 'Hermit' brought tears into his eyes.

Baxter's 'Reaſons of the Chriſtian Religion,' he thought, contained the beſt collection of the evidences of the divinity of the Chriſtian ſyſtem.

Being aſked what works of Richard Baxter's a perſon ſhould read, he ſaid, "Any of them; they are all good."

Johnſon

Johnſon praiſed John Bunyan highly. "His 'Pilgrim's Progreſs' has great merit, both for invention, imagination, and the conduct of the ſtory; and it has had the beſt evidence of its merit, the general and continued approbation of mankind. Few books, I believe, have had a more extenſive ſale. It is remarkable, that it begins very much like the poem of Dante; yet there was no tranſlation of Dante when Bunyan wrote. There is reaſon to think that he had read Spenſer."

Mr. Boſwell mentioning that we were to have the Remains of Mr. Gray, in proſe and verſe, publiſhed by Mr. Maſon, "I think (ſaid Johnſon) we have had enough of Gray."

Mr. Murphy ſaid, that the Memoirs of Gray's Life ſet him much higher in his eſtimation than his Poems did; for you there ſaw a man conſtantly at work in literature.—Johnſon acquieſced in this, but depreciated the book, perhaps unreaſonably; for he ſaid, "I forced myſelf to read it, only becauſe it was a common topick of converſation. I found it mighty dull; and as to the ſtyle, it is fit for the ſecond table."

He now gave it as his opinion, that "Akenſide was a ſuperior poet both to Gray and Maſon." Yet he ſaid, "I ſee they have publiſhed a ſplendid edition of Akenſide's works.

One bad ode may be ſuffered; but a number of them together makes one ſick."—BOSWELL. "Akenſide's diſtinguiſhed poem is his 'Pleaſures of Imagination;' but for my part, I never could admire it ſo much as moſt people do."—JOHNSON. "Sir, I could not read it through."—*B.* "I have read it through; but I did not find any great power in it."

Mr. B. told him, that he heard Dr. Percy was writing the hiſtory of the wolf in Great Britain. JOHNSON. "The wolf, Sir! why the wolf? Why does he not write of the bear, which we had formerly? Nay, it is ſaid we had the beaver; or why does he not write of the grey rat, the Hanover rat, as it is called, becauſe it is ſaid to have come into this country about the time that the family of Hanover came? I ſhould like to ſee 'The Hiſtory of the Grey Rat,' by Thomas Percy, D. D. Chaplain in Ordinary to his Majeſty," (laughing immoderately).—BOSWELL. "I am afraid a court chaplain could not decently write of the grey rat."—*J.* "Sir, he need not give it the name of the Hanover rat."—Thus could he indulge a luxuriant ſportive imagination, when talking of a friend whom he loved and eſteemed.

Having talked of Grainger's 'Sugar Cane,' Mr. Boſwell mentioned Mr. Langton's having told him, that this poem, when read in manuſcript

muſcript at Sir Joſhua Reynolds's, had made all the aſſembled wits burſt into a laugh, when after much blank-verſe pomp, the poet began a new paragraph thus:

"Now, Muſe, let's ſing of *rats*."

And what increaſed the ridicule was, that one of the company, who ſlily overlooked the reader, perceived that the word had been originally *mice*, and had been altered to *rats* as more dignified.

This paſſage does not appear in the printed work. Dr. Grainger or ſome of his friends, it ſhould ſeem, having become ſenſible that introducing even *Rats* in a grave poem might be liable to banter. He, however, could not bring himſelf to relinquiſh the idea; for they are thus, in a ſtill more ludicrous manner, periphraſtically exhibited in his Poem as it now ſtands.

"Nor with leſs waſte the whiſker'd vermin race,
"A countleſs clan, deſpoil the lowland cane."

Johnſon ſaid, that Dr. Grainger was an agreeable man; a man who would do any good that was in his power. His tranſlation of Tibullus, he thought, was very well done; but 'The Sugar Cane' did not pleaſe him; for he exclaimed, "What could he make of a ſugar-

cane? One might as well write the 'Parſley Bed, a Poem;' or, 'The Cabbage Garden, a Poem."—BOSWELL. "You muſt then *pickle* your cabbage with the *ſal atticum*."—JOHNSON. "You know there is already 'The Hop Garden, a Poem;' and I think one could ſay a great deal about cabbage. The poem might begin with the advantages of civilized ſociety over a rude ſtate, exemplified by the Scotch, who had no cabbages till Oliver Cromwell's ſoldiers introduced them; and one might thus ſhew how arts are propagated by conqueſt, as they were by the Roman arms."—He ſeemed to be much diverted with the fertility of his own fancy.

He ſpoke ſlightingly of Dyer's 'Fleece.' "The ſubject, Sir, cannot be made poetical. How can a man write poetically of ſerges and druggets? Yet you will hear many people talk to you gravely of that *excellent* poem 'The Fleece."

Speaking of Cheyne, whom Mr. Boſwell reckoned whimſical, "So he was (ſaid Johnſon) in ſome things; but there is no end of objections. There are few books to which ſome objection or other may not be made."—He added, "I would not have you read any thing elſe of Cheyne, but his book on Health, and his 'Engliſh Malady."

He

He ſaid, that the book entitled 'The Lives of the Poets,' by Mr. Cibber, was entirely compiled by Mr. Shiels, a Scotchman, one of his amanuenſes. "The bookſellers (ſaid he) gave Theophilus Cibber, who was then in priſon, ten guineas to allow *Mr. Cibber* to be put upon the title-page, as the author; by this, a double impoſition was intended: in the firſt place, that it was the work of a Cibber at all; and in the ſecond place, that it was the work of old Cibber" *.

"I once

* In the Monthly Review for May 1792, there is a correction of the above paſſage. "This account (ſays the Critic) is very inaccurate. The following ſtatement of facts we know to be true, in every material circumſtance:—Shiels was the principal collector and digeſter of the materials for the work; but as he was very raw in authorſhip, and an indifferent writer in proſe, and his language full of Scotticiſms, Cibber, who was a clever, lively fellow, and then ſoliciting employment among the bookſellers, was engaged to correct the ſtyle and diction of the whole work, then intended to make only four volumes, with power to alter, expunge, or add, as he liked. He was alſo to ſupply notes occaſionally, eſpecially concerning thoſe dramatic poets with whom he had been chiefly converſant. He alſo engaged to write ſeveral of the Lives; which (as we are told) he accordingly performed. He was farther uſeful in ſtriking out the Jacobitical and Tory ſentiments which Shiels had induſtriouſly interſperſed wherever he could bring them in; and, as the ſucceſs of the work appeared, after all, very doubtful, he was content with twenty-one pounds for his labour, beſides a few ſets

" I once introduced (ſays Mr. B.) Ariſtotle's doctrine in his 'Art of Poetry,' of καθαρσις των παθημαλων, the purging of the paſſions, as the purpoſe

of the books to diſperſe among his friends. Shiels had nearly ſeventy pounds, beſide the advantage of many of the beſt lives in the work being communicated by friends to the undertaking; and for which Mr. Shiels had the ſame conſideration as for the reſt, being paid by the ſheet for the whole. He was, however, ſo angry with his Whiggiſh ſupervifor (THE. like his father, being a violent ſtickler for the political principles which prevailed in the reign of George the Second), for ſo unmercifully mutilating his copy, and ſcouting his politics, that he wrote Cibber a challenge; but was prevented from ſending it by the publiſher, who fairly laughed him out of his fury. The proprietors, too, were diſcontented in the end, on account of Mr. Cibber's unexpected induſtry; for his corrections and alterations in the proof-ſheets were ſo numerous and conſiderable, that the printer made for them a grievous addition to his bill; and, in fine, all parties were diſſatisfied. On the whole, the work was productive of no profit to the undertakers, who had agreed, in caſe of ſucceſs, to make Cibber a preſent of ſome addition to the twenty guineas which he had received, and for which his receipt is now in the bookſeller's hands. We are farther aſſured, that he actually obtained an additional ſum. He ſoon after (in the year 1758) unfortunately embarked for Dublin, on an engagement for one of the theatres there: but the ſhip was caſt away, and every perſon on board periſhed. There were about ſixty paſſengers, among whom was the Earl of Drogheda, with many other perſons of conſequence and property.

"As

purpoſe of tragedy. But how are the paſſions to be purged by terror and pity?" (ſaid I, with an aſſumed air of ignorance to excite him to talk, for which it was often neceſſary to employ ſome addreſs).—JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, you are to conſider what is the meaning of purg-

"As to the alledged deſign of making the compilement paſs for the work of old Mr. Cibber, the charges ſeem to have been founded on a ſomewhat uncharitable conſtruction. We are aſſured that the thought was not harboured by ſome of the proprietors, who are ſtill living; and we hope that it did not occur to the firſt deſigner of the work, who was alſo the printer of it, and who bore a reſpectable character.

"We have been induced to enter thus circumſtantially into the foregoing detail of facts relating to the lives of the Poets, compiled by Meſſrs. Cibber and Shiels, from a ſincere regard to that ſacred principle of Truth, to which Dr. Johnſon ſo rigidly adhered, according to the beſt of his knowledge; and which, we believe, *no conſideration* would have prevailed on him to violate. In regard to the matter, which we now diſmiſs, he had, no doubt, been miſled by partial and wrong information. Shiels was the doctor's amanuenſis; he had quarrelled with Cibber; it is natural to ſuppoſe that he told his ſtory in his own way; and it is certain that he was not "a very ſturdy moraliſt."

This explanation appears very ſatisfactory. It is, however, to be obſerved, that the ſtory told by Johnſon does not reſt ſolely upon this record of his converſation; for he himſelf has publiſhed it in his Life of Hammond, where he ſays, "The manuſcript of Shiels is now in *my* poſſeſſion." Very probably he had truſted to Shiels's word, and never looked at it ſo as to compare it with 'The Lives of the Poets,' as publiſhed under Mr. Cibber's name.

ing

ing in the original ſenſe. It is to expel impurities from the human body. The mind is ſubject to the ſame imperfection. The paſſions are the great movers of human actions; but they are mixed with ſuch impurities, that it is neceſſary they ſhould be purged or refined by means of terror and pity. For inſtance, ambition is a noble paſſion; but by ſeeing upon the ſtage that a man, who is ſo exceſſively ambitious as to raiſe himſelf by injuſtice, is puniſhed, we are terrified at the fatal conſequences of ſuch a paſſion. In the ſame manner a certain degree of reſentment is neceſſary; but if we ſee that a man carries it too far, we pity the object of it, and are taught to moderate that paſſion."

Mr. Boſwell obſerved, that the great defect of the tragedy of 'Othello' was, that it had not a moral; for that no man could reſiſt the circumſtances of ſuſpicion which were artfully ſuggeſted to Othello's mind. JOHNSON. "In the firſt place, Sir, we learn from Othello this very uſeful moral, not to make an unequal match; in the ſecond place, we learn not to yield too readily to ſuſpicion. The handkerchief is merely a trick, though a very pretty trick: but there are no other circumſtances of reaſonable ſuſpicion, except what is related by Iago of Caſſio's warm expreſſions concerning Deſdemona

Deſdemona in his ſleep; and that depended entirely upon the aſſertion of one man. No, Sir, I think Othello has more moral than almoſt any play."

Sir Joſhua Reynolds mentioned Mr. Cumberland's Odes, which were then juſt publiſhed. JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, they would have been thought as good as Odes commonly are, if Cumberland had not put his name to them; but a name immediately draws cenſure, unleſs it be a name that bears down every thing before it. Nay Cumberland has made his Odes ſubſidiary to the fame of another man; they might have run well enough by themſelves, but he has not only loaded them with a name, but has made them carry double."

Johnſon ſaid, "The little volumes entitled 'Reſpublicæ,' which are very well done, were a bookſeller's work."

Of Chatterton, he ſaid, "This is the moſt extraordinary young man that has encountered my knowledge. It is wonderful how the whelp has written ſuch things."

Speaking of the ancient poets, he obſerved, "Theocritus is not deſerving of very high reſpect as a writer; as to the paſtoral part, Virgil is very evidently ſuperior. He wrote when there had been a larger influx of knowledge into the world than when Theocritus

lived. Theocritus does not abound in deſcription, though living in a beautiful country; the manners painted are coarſe and groſs. Virgil has much more deſcription, more ſentiment, more of nature, and more of art. Some of the moſt excellent parts of Theocritus are where Caſtor and Pollux, going with the other Argonauts, land on the Bebrycian coaſt, and there fall into a diſpute with Amycus, the king of that country; which is as well conducted as Euripides could have done it; and the battle is well related. Afterwards they carry off a woman, whoſe two brothers come to recover her, and expoſtulate with Caſtor and Pollux on their injuſtice; but they pay no regard to the brothers, and a battle enſues, where Caſtor and his brother are triumphant. Theocritus ſeems not to have ſeen that the brothers have the advantage in their argument over his Argonaut heroes.—'The Sicilian Goſſips' is a piece of merit. Callimachus is a writer of little excellence. The chief thing to be learned from him is his account of Rites and Mythology, which though deſirable to be known for the ſake of underſtanding other parts of ancient authors, is the leaſt pleaſing or valuable part of their writings."

"Mattaire's account of the Stephani is a heavy book. He ſeems to have been a puzzle-headed

headed man, with a large ſhare of ſcholarſhip, but with little geometry or logic in his head, without method, and poſſeſſed of little genius. He wrote Latin verſes from time to time, and publiſhed a ſet in his old age which he called 'Senilia;' in which he ſhews ſo little learning or taſte in writing, as to make *Carteret* a dactyl. In matters of genealogy it is neceſſary to give the bare names as they are; but in poetry, and in proſe of any elegance in the writing, they require to have inflection given to them. His book of the Dialects is a ſad heap of confuſion; the only way to write on them is to tabulate them with Notes, added at the bottom of the page, and references."

Huggins, the tranſlator of Arioſto, and Mr. Thomas Warton, in the early part of his literary life, had a diſpute concerning that poet, of whom Mr. Warton, in his 'Obſervations on Spenſer's Fairy Queen,' gave ſome account, which Huggins attempted to anſwer with violence, and ſaid, "I will *militate* no longer againſt his *neſcience*." Huggins was maſter of the ſubject, but wanted expreſſion. Mr. Warton's knowledge of it was then imperfect, but his manner lively and elegant. Johnſon ſaid, "It appears to me, that Huggins has ball without powder, and Warton powder without ball."

Johnſon

Johnſon uſed at one time to go occaſionally to the Green-room of Drury-lane Theatre, where he was much regarded by the players, and was very eaſy and facetious with them. He had a very high opinion of Mrs. Clive's comick powers, and converſed more with her than with any of them. He ſaid, "Clive, Sir, is a good thing to ſit by, ſhe always underſtands what you ſay;" and ſhe ſaid of him, "I love to ſit by Dr. Johnſon, he always entertains me." One night, when 'The Recruiting Officer' was acted, he ſaid to Mr. Holland, who had been expreſſing an apprehenſion that Dr. Johnſon would diſdain the works of Farquhar; "No, Sir, I think Farquhar a man whoſe writings have conſiderable merit."

Talking of the farce of 'High Life Below Stairs' he ſaid, "Here is a farce, which is really very diverting when you ſee it acted; and yet one may read it, and not know that one has been reading any thing at all."

Johnſon, who had done liberal juſtice to Warburton in his edition of Shakeſpeare, which was publiſhed during the life of that powerful writer, with ſtill greater liberality took an opportunity, in the life of Pope, of paying the tribute due to him, when he was no longer in "high place," but numbered with the dead.

Speaking

Speaking of Boetius, who was the favourite writer of the middle ages, he ſaid, it was very ſurpriſing, that upon ſuch a ſubject, and in ſuch a ſituation, he ſhould be *magis philoſophus quàm Chriſtianus*.

" Burton's 'Anatomy of Melancholy' (ſaid Johnſon) is a valuable work. It is, perhaps, overloaded with quotation. But there is great ſpirit and great power in what Burton ſays, when he writes from his own mind." He obſerved, that it was the only book that ever took him out of bed two hours ſooner than he wiſhed to riſe.

Books of Travels having been mentioned, Johnſon praiſed Pennant very highly. Dr. Percy (who was preſent), knowing himſelf to be the heir male of the ancient Percies, and having the warmeſt attachment to the noble Houſe of Northumberland, could not ſit quietly and hear a man praiſed, who had ſpoken diſreſpectfully of Alnwick-Caſtle, and the Duke's pleaſure-grounds, eſpecially as he thought meanly of his Travels. He therefore oppoſed Johnſon eagerly.—JOHNSON. " Pennant, in what he has ſaid of Alnwick, has done what he intended: he has made you very angry."—PERCY. " He has ſaid the garden is *trim*, which is repreſenting it like a citizen's parterre, when the truth is, there is a very large extent of

of fine turf and gravel walks."—*J.* "According to your own account, Sir, Pennant is right. It is trim. Here is graſs cut cloſe, and gravel rolled ſmooth. Is not that trim? The extent is nothing againſt that; a mile may be as trim as a ſquare yard. Your extent puts me in mind of the citizen's enlarged dinner, two pieces of roaſt-beef, and two puddings. There is no variety, no mind exerted in laying out the ground, no trees."—PERCY. "He pretends to give the natural hiſtory of Northumberland, and yet takes no notice of the immenſe number of trees planted there of late."—*J.* "That, Sir, has nothing to do with the *natural* hiſtory: that is *civil* hiſtory. A man who gives the natural hiſtory of the oak, is not to tell how many oaks have been planted in this place or that. A man who gives the natural hiſtory of the cow, is not to tell how many cows are milked at Iſlington. The animal is the ſame, whether milked in the Park or at Iſlington."—*P.* "Pennant does not deſcribe well; a carrier who goes along the ſide of Lochlomond would deſcribe it better."—*J.* "I think he deſcribes very well."—*P.* "I travelled after him."—*J.* "And *I* travelled after him."—*P.* "But, my good friend, you are ſhort-ſighted, and do not ſee ſo well as I do." The company wondered at Dr. Percy's venturing thus. Dr. Johnſon ſaid

ſaid nothing at the time; but inflammable particles were collecting for a cloud to burſt. In a little while Dr. Percy ſaid ſomething more in diſparagement of Pennant.—*J.* (pointedly) "This is the reſentment of a narrow mind, becauſe he did not find every thing in Northumberland."—*P.* (feeling the ſtroke) "Sir, you may be as rude as you pleaſe."—*J.* "Hold, Sir! Don't talk of rudeneſs; remember, Sir, you told me (puffing hard with paſſion ſtruggling for a vent) I was ſhort-ſighted. We have done with civility. We are to be as rude as we pleaſe."—*P.* "Upon my honour, Sir, I did not mean to be uncivil."—*J.* "I cannot ſay ſo, Sir; I *did* mean to be uncivil, thinking *you* had been uncivil." Dr. Percy roſe, ran up to him, and, taking him by the hand, aſſured him affectionately that his meaning had been miſunderſtood; upon which a reconciliation inſtantly took place.—*J.* "My dear Sir, I am willing you ſhall *hang* Pennant."—*P.* (reſuming the former ſubject) "Pennant complains that the helmet is not hung out to invite to the hall of hoſpitality. Now I never heard that it was the cuſtom to hang out a *helmet*.—*J.* "Hang him up, hang him up."—BOSWELL. (humouring the joke) "Hang out his ſkull inſtead of a helmet, and you may drink ale out of it in your hall of Odin, as he is your enemy;

that will be truly ancient. *There* will be 'Northern Antiquities."—*J.* "He's a *Whig*, Sir; a *ſad dog*, (ſmiling at his own violent expreſſions, merely for *political* difference of opinion). But he's the beſt traveller I ever read; he obſerves more things than any one elſe does."

He gave much praiſe to his friend Dr. Burney's elegant and entertaining Travels, and told Mr. Seward, that he had them in his eye, when writing his 'Journey to the Weſtern Iſlands of Scotland.'

Dr. Dodd's poem entitled, 'Thoughts in a Priſon,' appearing an extraordinary effort by a man who was in Newgate for a capital crime, Mr. Boſwell was deſirous to hear Johnſon's opinion of it. To my ſurprize (ſays Mr. B.) he told me he had not read a line of it. I took up the book, and read a paſſage to him.—JOHNSON. "Pretty well, if you are previouſly diſpoſed to like them." I read another paſſage, with which he was better pleaſed. He then took the book into his own hands, and having looked at the prayer at the end of it, he ſaid, "What *evidence* is there that this was compoſed the night before he ſuffered? *I* do not believe it." He then read aloud where he prays for the King, &c. and obſerved, "Sir, do you think that a man the night before he is

to be hanged cares for the ſucceſſion of a royal family? Though he *may* have compoſed this prayer then. A man who has been canting all his life may cant to the laſt; and yet a man who has been refuſed a pardon after ſo much petitioning would hardly be praying thus fervently for the King."

Mr. Boſwell one day aſked, "Was not Dr. John Campbell a very inaccurate man in his narrative, Sir? He once told me, that he drank thirteen bottles of port at a ſitting."—JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, I do not know that Campbell ever lied with pen and ink; but you could not entirely depend on any thing he told you in converſation, if there was fact mixed with it. However, I loved Campbell: he was a ſolid orthodox man; he had a reverence for religion. Though defective in practice, he was religious in principle; and he did nothing groſsly wrong that I have heard."

Mr. Boſwell had lent Johnſon, 'An Account of Scotland, in 1702,' written by a man of various enquiry, an Engliſh Chaplain to a regiment ſtationed there.—"It is ſad ſtuff, Sir (ſaid the Doctor), miſerably written, as books in general then were. There is now an elegance of ſtile univerſally diffuſed. No man now writes ſo ill as Martin's Account of the Hebrides is written. A man could not write ſo ill, if he

ſhould try. Set a merchant's clerk now to write, and he'll do better."

"Thomas à Kempis (he obſerved) muſt be a good book, as the world has opened its arms to receive it. It is ſaid to have been printed, in one language or other, as many times as there have been months ſince it firſt came out. I always was ſtruck with this ſentence in it:—'Be not angry that you cannot make others as you wiſh them to be, ſince you cannot make yourſelf as you wiſh to be."

He ſaid, the critics had done too much honour to Sir Richard Blackmore, by writing ſo much againſt him. In his 'Creation' he had been helped by various wits, a line by Phillips and a line by Tickell; ſo that by their aid, and that of others, the poem had been made out.

"Lord Cheſterfield's 'Letters to his Son' (he thought) might be made a very pretty book. Take out the immorality, and it ſhould be put into the hands of every young gentleman. An elegant manner and eaſineſs of behaviour are acquired gradually and imperceptibly. No man can ſay 'I'll be genteel.' There are ten genteel women for one genteel man, becauſe they are more reſtrained. A man without ſome degree of reſtraint is inſufferable; but we are all leſs reſtrained than women. Were a woman

ſitting

ſitting in company to put out her legs before her as moſt men do, we ſhould be tempted to kick them in."

"I read (ſaid he) 'Sharpe's Letters on Italy' over again when I was at Bath. There is a great deal of matter in them."

Johnſon uſually ſpoke with contempt of Colley Cibber. "It is wonderful (ſaid he) that a man who for forty years had lived with the great and the witty ſhould have acquired ſo ill the talents of converſation: and he had but half to furniſh; for one half of what he ſaid was oaths." He, however, allowed conſiderable merit to ſome of his comedies, and ſaid, there was no reaſon to believe that the 'Careleſs Huſband' was not written by himſelf.—Mr. Davies ſaid, he was the firſt dramatic writer who introduced genteel ladies upon the ſtage. Johnſon refuted this obſervation by inſtancing ſeveral ſuch characters in comedies before his time. DAVIES. (trying to defend himſelf from a charge of ignorance.) "I mean genteel moral characters."—"I think (ſaid Mr. Hicky), gentility and morality are inſeparable."—BOSWELL. "By no means, Sir. The genteeleſt characters are often the moſt immoral. Does not Lord Cheſterfield give precepts for uniting wickedneſs and the graces? A man indeed is not genteel when he gets drunk;

but moſt vices may be committed very genteelly: a man may debauch his friend's wife genteelly; he may cheat at cards genteelly."—HICKY. "I do not think *that* is genteel."—*B.* "Sir, it may not be like a gentleman; but it may be genteel."—*J.* "You are meaning two different things. One means exterior grace; the other honour. It is certain that a man may be very immoral with exterior grace. Lovelace, in 'Clariſſa,' is a very genteel and a very wicked character. Tom Hervey, who died t'other day, though a vicious man, was one of the genteeleſt men that ever lived."—*B.* "Cibber was a man of obſervation?"—*J.* "I think not."—*B.* "You will allow his 'Apology' to be well done."—*J.* "Very well done to be ſure, Sir.—That book is a ſtriking proof of the juſtice of Pope's remark:

"Each might his ſeveral province well command,
"Would all but ſtoop to what they underſtand."

B. "And his plays are good."—*J.* "Yes; but that was his trade; *l'eſprit du corps*; he had been all his life among players and play-writers. I wonder that he had ſo little to ſay in converſation, for he had kept the beſt company, and learnt all that can be got by the ear. He abuſed Pindar to me, and then ſhewed me an Ode of his own, with an abſurd couplet, making

ing a linnet ſoar on an eagle's wings. I told him that when the ancients made a ſimile, they always made it like ſomething real."

Of old Sheridan he remarked, that he neither wanted parts nor literature; but that his vanity and Quixotiſm obſcured his merits. He ſaid, foppery was never cured; it was the bad ſtamina of the mind, which, like thoſe of the body, were never rectified: once a coxcomb, and always a coxcomb.

When the Rev. Mr. Horne (now Horne Tooke, Eſq.) publiſhed his 'Letter to Mr. Dunning on the Engliſh Particle,' Johnſon read it; and, though not treated in it with ſufficient reſpect, he had candour enough to ſay to Mr. Seward, "Were I to make a new edition of my Dictionary, I would adopt ſeveral of Mr. Horne's etymologies; I hope they did not put the dog into the pillory for his libel, he has too much literature for that."

He ſaid, that Bacon was a favourite author with him; but he had never read his works till he was compiling the Engliſh Dictionary, in which, he ſaid, we might ſee Bacon very often quoted. He obſerved, that a Dictionary of the Engliſh language might be compiled from Bacon's writings alone, and that he had once an intention of giving an edition of Bacon, at leaſt of his Engliſh works, and writing the

Life of that great man. Had he executed this intention, there can be no doubt that he would have done it in a moſt maſterly manner.

Of his fellow-collegian, the celebrated Mr. George Whitefield, he ſaid, "Whitefield never drew ſo much attention as a mountebank does; he did not draw attention by doing better than others, but by doing what was ſtrange. Were Aſtley to preach a ſermon ſtanding upon his head on a horſe's back, he would collect a multitude to hear him; but no wiſe man would ſay he had made a better ſermon for that. I never treated Whitefield's miniſtry with contempt; I believe he did good. He had devoted himſelf to the lower claſſes of mankind, and among them he was of uſe; but when familiarity and noiſe claim the praiſe due to knowledge, art, and elegance, we muſt beat down ſuch pretenſions." He would not allow much merit to Whitefield's oratory. "His popularity, Sir (ſaid he), is chiefly owing to the peculiarity of his manner. He would be followed by crowds were he to wear a night-cap in the pulpit, or were he to preach from a tree."

He ſaid, "John Weſley's converſation is good, but he is never at leiſure. He is always obliged to go at a certain hour. This is very diſagreeable to a man who loves to fold his legs and have out his talk, as I do."

At

At another time he ſaid, "I have read Dr. Blair's ſermon on Devotion, from the text '*Cornelius, a devout man.*' His doctrine is the beſt limited, the beſt expreſſed; there is the moſt warmth without fanaticiſm, the moſt rational tranſport. There is one part of it which I diſapprove, and I'd have him correct it; which is, that 'he who does not feel joy in religion is far from the kingdom of Heaven!' There are many good men whoſe fear of God predominates over their love. It may diſcourage. It was raſhly ſaid. A noble ſermon it is indeed. I wiſh Blair would come over to the church of England."

He talked of Lord Lyttelton's extreme anxiety as an author, obſerving, that "he was thirty years in preparing his Hiſtory, and that he employed a man to point it for him; as if (laughing) another man could point his ſenſe better than himſelf." Mr. Murphy ſaid, he underſtood his hiſtory was kept back ſeveral years for fear of Smollet. JOHNSON. "This ſeems ſtrange to Murphy and me, who never felt that anxiety, but ſent what we wrote to the preſs, and let it take its chance."—MRS. THRALE. "The time has been, Sir, when you felt it."—*J.* "Why really, Madam, I do not recollect a time when that was the caſe."

Lord Lyttelton's Dialogues he deemed a nugatory performance. "That man (ſaid he) ſat

ſat down to write a book, to tell the world what the world had all his life been telling him."

He attacked Lord Monboddo's ſtrange ſpeculation on the primitive ſtate of human nature; obſerving, "Sir, it is all conjecture about a thing uſeleſs, even were it known to be true. Knowledge of all kinds is good: conjecture as to things uſeful is good; but conjecture as to what it would be uſeleſs to know, ſuch as whether men went upon all four, is very idle."

The converſation turning upon Mr. David Hume's ſtyle, Johnſon ſaid, "Why, Sir, his ſtyle is not Engliſh; the ſtructure of his ſentences is French. Now the French ſtructure and the Engliſh ſtructure may, in the nature of things, be equally good; but if you allow that the Engliſh language is eſtabliſhed, he is wrong. My name might originally have been Nicholſon, as well as Johnſon; but were you to call me Nicholſon now, you would call me very abſurdly."

Dr. Adams had diſtinguiſhed himſelf by an able anſwer to David Hume's 'Eſſay on Miracles.' He told Mr. Boſwell he had once dined in company with Hume in London; that Hume ſhook hands with him, and ſaid, "You have treated me much better than I deſerve;"

and

and that they exchanged viſits. Mr. B. objected to treating an infidel writer with ſmooth civility. "Where there is a controverſy concerning a paſſage in a claſſic author, or concerning a queſtion in antiquities, or any other ſubject in which human happineſs is not deeply intereſted (Mr. B. argues), a man may treat his antagoniſt with politeneſs and even reſpect; but where the controverſy is concerning the truth of religion, it is of ſuch vaſt importance to him who maintains it to obtain the victory, that the perſon of an opponent ought not to be ſpared. If a man firmly believes that religion is an invaluable treaſure, he will conſider a writer who endeavours to deprive mankind of it as a *robber*; he will look upon him as *odious*, though the infidel might think himſelf in the right. A robber who reaſons as the gang do in the 'Beggar's Opera,' who call themſelves *practical* philoſophers, and may have as much ſincerity as pernicious *ſpeculative* philoſophers, is not the leſs an object of juſt indignation. An abandoned profligate may think that it is not wrong to debauch my wife; but ſhall I therefore not deteſt him? and if I catch him in making an attempt, ſhall I treat him with politeneſs? No, I will kick him down ſtairs, or run him through the body; that is, if I really love my wife, or have a true rational

rational notion of honour. An infidel then ſhould not be treated handſomely by a Chriſtian, merely becauſe he endeavours to rob with ingenuity. I do declare, however, that I am exceedingly unwilling to be provoked to anger; and could I be perſuaded that truth would not ſuffer from a cool moderation in its defenders, I ſhould wiſh to preſerve good humour, at leaſt, in every controverſy; nor indeed do I ſee why a man ſhould loſe his temper while he does all he can to refute an opponent. I think ridicule may be fairly uſed againſt an infidel; for inſtance, if he be an ugly fellow, and yet abſurdly vain of his perſon, we may contraſt his appearance with Cicero's beautiful image of Virtue, could ſhe be ſeen. Johnſon coincided with me and ſaid, 'When a man voluntarily engages in an important controverſy, he is to do all he can to leſſen his antagoniſt, becauſe authority from perſonal reſpect has much weight with moſt people, and often more than reaſoning. If my antagoniſt writes bad language, though that may not be eſſential to the queſtion, I will attack him for his bad language.' —ADAMS. "You would not joſtle a chimney-ſweeper."—JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, if it were neceſſary to joſtle him *down*."

He cenſured Lord Kaimes's 'Sketches of the Hiſtory of Man,' for miſrepreſenting Clarendon's

rendon's account of the appearance of Sir George Villiers's ghoſt, as if Clarendon were weakly credulous; when the truth is, that Clarendon only ſays, that the ſtory was upon a better foundation of credit than uſually ſuch diſcourſes are founded upon; nay ſpeaks thus of the perſon who was reported to have ſeen the viſion, "the poor man, *if he had been at all waking*;" which Lord Kaimes has omitted. He added, "in this book it is maintained that virtue is natural to man, and that if we would but conſult our own hearts we ſhould be virtuous. Now after conſulting our own hearts all we can, and with all the helps we have, we find how few of us are virtuous. This is ſaying a thing which all mankind know not to be true."

"The Elements of Criticiſm,' (ſaid he), is a pretty eſſay, and deſerves to be held in ſome eſtimation, though much of it is chimerical." He proceeded: "The Scotchman has taken the right method in his 'Elements of Criticiſm.' I do not mean that he has taught us any thing; but he has told us old things in a new way."—MURPHY. "He ſeems to have read a great deal of French criticiſm, and wants to make it his own; as if he had been for years anatomiſing the heart of man, and peeping into every cranny of it."—GOLDSMITH. "It

is

is eaſier to write that book, than to read it."—JOHNSON. "We have an example of true criticiſm in Burke's 'Eſſay on the Sublime and Beautiful'; and if I recollect there is alſo Du Bos; and Bouhours, who ſhews all beauty to depend on truth. There is no great merit in telling how many plays have ghoſts in them, and how this Ghoſt is better than that. You muſt ſhew how terror is impreſſed on the human heart.—In the deſcription of night in Macbeth, the beetle and the bat detract from the general idea of darkneſs,—inſpiſſated gloom."

Johnſon told Mr. B. that he was glad that he had by General Oglethorpe's means become acquainted with Dr. Shebbeare. Indeed (ſays Mr. B.) that gentleman, whatever objections were made to him, had knowledge and abilities much above the claſs of ordinary writers, and deſerves to be remembered as a reſpectable name in literature, were it only for his admirable 'Letters on the Engliſh Nation,' under the name of 'Battiſta Angeloni, a Jeſuit.'

Johnſon and Shebbeare were frequently named together, as having in former reigns had no predilection for the family of Hanover. The author of the celebrated 'Heroick Epiſtle to Sir William Chambers' introduces them in one line, in a liſt of thoſe who "taſted the ſweets

ſweets of his preſent Majeſty's reign." Such was Johnſon's candid reliſh of the merit of that ſatire, that he allowed Dr. Goldſmith, as he told Mr. Boſwell, to read it to him from beginning to end, and did not refuſe his praiſe to its execution.

Mr. Boſwell mentioned the very liberal payment which had been received for reviewing; and, as evidence of this, that it had been proved in a trial, that Dr. Shebbeare had received ſix guineas a ſheet for that kind of literary labour.—JOHNSON. "Sir, he might get ſix guineas for a particular ſheet, but not *communibus ſheetibus.*"—BOSWELL. "Pray, Sir, by a ſheet of review is it meant that it ſhall be all of the writer's own compoſition? or are extracts, made from the book reviewed, deducted?"—*J.* "No, Sir; it is a ſheet, no matter of what."—*B.* "I think that is not reaſonable."—*J.* "Yes, Sir, it is. A man will more eaſily write a ſheet all his own, than read an octavo volume to get extracts." To one of Johnſon's wonderful fertility of mind, perhaps, writing was really eaſier than reading and extracting; but with ordinary men the caſe is very different. A great deal, indeed, will depend upon the care and judgment with which the extracts are made. We can (obſerves Mr. B.) ſuppoſe the operation to be tedious and difficult; but in many inſtances we muſt obſerve crude morſels

morſels cut out of books as if at random; and when a large extract is made from one place, it ſurely may be done with very little trouble. One might, I muſt acknowledge however, be led from the practice of Reviewers to ſuppoſe that they take a pleaſure in original writing; for we often find, that inſtead of giving an accurate account of what has been done by the author whoſe work they are reviewing, which is ſurely the proper buſineſs of a literary journal, they produce ſome plauſible and ingenious conceits of their own upon the topicks which have been diſcuſſed.

Again talking of the Reviews, Johnſon ſaid, "I think them very impartial: I do not know an inſtance of partiality."—"The Monthly Reviewers (ſaid he) are not Deiſts; but they are Chriſtians with as little chriſtianity as may be; and are for pulling down all eſtabliſhments. The Critical Reviewers are for ſupporting the conſtitution both in Church and State. The Critical Reviewers, I believe, often review without reading the books through; but lay hold of a topick, and write chiefly from their own minds. The Monthly Reviewers are duller men, and are glad to read the books through." Sir Joſhua Reynolds ſaid, that he wondered to find ſo much good writing employed in them, when the authors were to remain unknown, and ſo could not have the motive

motive of fame.—JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, thoſe who write in them write well in order to be paid well."

He praiſed Signior Baretti. "His account of Italy (ſaid he) is a very entertaining book; and, Sir, I know no man who carries his head higher in converſation than Baretti. There are ſtrong powers in his mind: he has not, indeed, many hooks; but with what hooks he has, he grapples very forcibly."

Mr. B. cenſured a ludicrous fantaſtick dialogue between two coach-horſes, and other ſuch ſtuff, which Baretti had lately publiſhed. Johnſon joined and ſaid, "Nothing odd will do long. 'Triſtram Shandy' did not laſt"—Mr. B. expreſſed a deſire to be acquainted with a lady who had been much talked of, and univerſally celebrated for extraordinary addreſs and inſinuation. Johnſon ſaid, "Never believe extraordinary characters which you hear of people. Depend upon it, Sir, they are exaggerated. You do not ſee one man ſhoot a great deal higher than another."—Mr. Burke was mentioned. "Yes (ſaid Johnſon); Burke *is* an extraordinary man; his ſtream of mind is perpetual."—The Doctor's high eſtimation of the talents of this gentleman was uniform from their early acquaintance. When Mr. Burke was firſt elected a member of Parliament, and Sir

John Hawkins expreſſed a wonder at his attaining a ſeat, Johnſon ſaid, "Now we who know Mr. Burke know that he will be one of the firſt men in this country." And once when Johnſon was ill, and unable to exert himſelf as much as uſual without fatigue, Mr. Burke having been mentioned, he ſaid, "That fellow calls forth all my powers. Were I to ſee Burke now it would kill me." So much was he accuſtomed to conſider converſation as a conteſt, and ſuch was his notion of Burke as an opponent.

He uſed frequently to obſerve, that men might be very eminent in a profeſſion without our perceiving any particular power of mind in them in converſation. "It ſeems ſtrange (ſaid he) that a man ſhould ſee ſo far to the right, who ſees ſo ſhort a way to the left. Burke is the only man whoſe common converſation correſponds with the general fame which he has in the world. Take up whatever topic you pleaſe, he is ready to meet you."

Talking of the wonderful concealment of the author of the letters ſigned *Junius*, he ſaid, "I ſhould have believed Burke to be Junius, becauſe I know no man but Burke who is capable of writing theſe letters; but Burke ſpontaneouſly denied it to me. The caſe would have been different had I aſked him if he was the author; a man ſo queſtioned, as to an

anonymous publication, may think he has a right to deny it *."

* In a work lately publiſhed, the following account is given of this writer; who appears to have obtained much more celebrity than the temporary nature of his writings and his virulent acrimony entitled him to.

"The bold aſſertions and keen inveĉtives with which the papers of *Junius* abounded throughout contributed greatly to their popularity and fame. They were occaſionally attributed to Lord Sackville, to the Right Hon. *W. G. Hamilton*, to the Right Hon. *Edmund Burke*, to *John Dunning*, Eſq. and many others; but without the leaſt ground or foundation in truth. It is to be obſerved of them, that all parties are attacked in them, except the Grenvilles. During their original publication, the writer lived in Norfolk-ſtreet, in the Strand, not in affluent circumſtances; but he did not write for pecuniary aid. He was a native of Ireland, of an honourable family, and of Trinity College, Dublin. He was at one time intended for the army, and at another for the bar; but private circumſtances prevented either taking place. Perhaps no man poſſeſſed a ſtronger memory. He frequently attended Parliament, and the Courts in Weſtminſter Hall; and ſometimes he committed to paper the ſpeeches he had heard.—When the conteſt concerning the Middleſex election had abated, he ceaſed to write, which was about the cloſe of the year 1771. However, towards the end of the year 1779, he reſumed his pen, and wrote a number of political eſſays, or letters, which he entitled *The Whig*. They were printed in one of the public papers of that time; they were in number 18; but they died with the other papers of the day. In the year 1791, he went to Madras with Lord Macartney, to whom he had been known in Ireland, and there he died."

The above account, however, we have been aſſured from authority is not to be relied on. The perſon alluded to was not the author of Junius.

However Johnſon may have caſually talked of Young the poet, yet when he ſat, as "an ardent judge zealous to his truſt, giving ſentence" upon the excellent works of Young, he allowed them the high praiſe to which they are juſtly entitled. "The Univerſal Paſſion (ſays he) is indeed a very great performance,—his diſtichs have the weight of ſolid ſentiment, and his points the ſharpneſs of reſiſtleſs truth. In his 'Night Thoughts' he has exhibited a very wide diſplay of original poetry, variegated with deep reflections and ſtriking alluſions; a wilderneſs of thought, in which the fertility of fancy ſcatters flowers of every hue and of every odour. This is one of the few poems in which blank verſe could not be changed for rhime but with diſadvantage. Particular lines are not to be regarded, the power is in the whole, and in the whole there is a magnificence like that aſcribed to Chineſe plantation, the magnificence of vaſt extent and endleſs diverſity."

Mr. Boſwell goes on to remark, "But there is in this Poem not only all that Johnſon ſo well brings in view, but a power of the *pathetick* beyond almoſt any example that I have ſeen. He who does not feel his nerves ſhaken, and his heart pierced by many paſſages in this extraordinary work, particularly by that moſt affecting

ſecting one which deſcribes the gradual torment ſuffered by the contemplation of an object of affectionate attachment viſibly and certainly decaying into diſſolution, muſt be of a hard and obſtinate frame. To all the other excellencies of 'Night Thoughts' let me add the great and peculiar one, that they contain not only the nobleſt ſentiments of virtue and contemplations on immortality, but the *Chriſtian Sacrifice*, the *Divine Propitiation*, with all its intereſting circumſtances, and conſolations to a wounded ſpirit, ſolemnly and poetically diſplayed in ſuch imagery and language as cannot fail to exalt, animate, and ſoothe the truly pious. No book whatever can be recommended to young perſons with better hopes of ſeaſoning their minds with *vital religion*, than Young's 'Night Thoughts."

Johnſon ſaid, that the deſcription of the temple, in 'The Mourning Bride,' was the fineſt poetical paſſage he had ever read; he recollected none in Shakſpeare equal to it. But ſaid Garrick (who was preſent, all-alarmed for 'the God of his idolatry'), we know not the extent and variety of his powers. We are to ſuppoſe there are ſuch paſſages in his works. Shakſpeare muſt not ſuffer from the badneſs of our memories."—Johnſon, diverted by this enthuſiaſtic jealouſy, went on with greater ar-

dour: No, Sir; Congreve has *nature*," (ſmiling on the tragick eagerneſs of Garrick); but compoſing himſelf, he added, "Sir, this is not comparing Congreve on the whole, with Shakeſpeare on the whole; but only maintaining that Congreve has one finer paſſage than any that can be found in Shakeſpeare. Sir, a man may have no more than ten guineas in the world, but he may have thoſe ten guineas in one piece; and ſo may have a finer piece than a man who has ten thouſand pounds; but then he has only one ten-guinea piece. What I mean is, that you can ſhew me no paſſage where there is ſimply a deſcription of material objects, without any intermixture of moral notions, which produces ſuch an effect." Mr. Murphy mentioned Shakeſpeare's deſcription of the night before the battle of Agincourt; but it was obſerved, it had *men* in it. Mr. Davies ſuggeſted the ſpeech of Juliet, in which ſhe figures herſelf awaking in the tomb of her anceſtors. Some one mentioned the deſcription of Dover Cliff. JOHNSON. "No, Sir; it ſhould be all precipice, all vacuum. The crows impede your fall. The diminiſhed appearance of the boats, and other circumſtances, are all very good deſcription; but do not impreſs the mind at once with the horrible idea of immenſe height. The impreſſion is divided; you paſs on by computation.

tion from one ſtage of the tremendous ſpace to another. Had the girl in 'The Mourning Bride' ſaid ſhe could not caſt her ſhoe to the top of one of the pillars in the temple, it would not have aided the idea, but weakened it." Again adverting to the paſſage in Congreve with high commendation, he ſaid, "Shakeſpeare never has ſix lines together without a fault. Perhaps you may find ſeven; but it does not refute my general aſſertion. If I come to an orchard, and ſay there's no fruit here, and then comes a poring man who finds two apples and three pears, and tells me, 'Sir, you are miſtaken, I have found both apples and pears,' I ſhould laugh at him; what would that be to the purpoſe?"

Talking of Shakſpeare's witches, Johnſon ſaid, "They are beings of his own creation; they are a compound of malignity and meanneſs, without any abilities; and are quite different from the Italian magician. King James ſays, in his 'Dæmonology,' 'Magicians command the devils; witches are their ſervants.' The Italian magicians are elegant beings."—RAMSAY. "Opera witches, not Drury Lane witches."

"Colman (ſaid Johnſon) in a note on his tranſlation of Terence, talking of Shakſpeare's learning, aſks, 'What ſays Farmer to this?

What ſays Johnſon?" Upon this he obſerved, "Sir, let Farmer anſwer for himſelf: *I* never engaged in this controverſy. I always ſaid, Shakſpeare had Latin enough to grammaticiſe his Engliſh."

The character of Mallet having been introduced, and ſpoken of ſlightingly by Goldſmith, Johnſon ſaid, "Why, Sir, Mallet had talents enough to keep his literary reputation alive as long as he himſelf lived; and that, let me tell you, is a good deal."—GOLDSMITH. "But I cannot agree that it was ſo. His literary reputation was dead long before his natural death. I conſider an author's literary reputation to be alive only while his name will enſure a good price for his copy from the bookſellers. I will get you (to Johnſon) a hundred guineas for any thing whatever that you ſhall write, if you put your name to it."

Mr. Boſwell mentioned Mallet's tragedy of 'Elvira,' which had been acted the preceding winter at Drury-lane, and that the Honourable Andrew Erſkine, Mr. Dempſter, and himſelf, had joined in writing a pamphlet, entitled 'Critical Strictures' againſt it. That the mildneſs of Dempſter's diſpoſition had, however, relented; and he had candidly ſaid, "We have hardly a right to abuſe this tragedy; for bad as it is, how vain ſhould either of us be

to

to write one not near ſo good!"—JOHNSON. "Why no, Sir; this is not juſt reaſoning. You *may* abuſe a tragedy, though you cannot write one. You may ſcold a carpenter who has made you a bad table, though you cannot make a table. It is not your trade to make tables."

Of Mr. Mallet he uſually ſpoke with no great reſpect; he ſaid, that he was ready for any dirty job; that he had wrote againſt Byng at the inſtigation of the miniſtry, and was equally ready to write for him, provided he found his account in it. "Mallet's Life of Bacon (ſaid he) has no inconſiderable merit as an acute and elegant diſſertation relative to its ſubject; but Mallet's mind was not comprehenſive enough to embrace the vaſt extent of Lord Verulam's genius and reſearch. Dr. Warburton therefore obſerved with witty juſtneſs, "that Mallet in his Life of Bacon had forgotten that he was a philoſopher; and that if he ſhould write the Life of the Duke of Marlborough, which he had undertaken to do, he would probably forget that he was a General."

Lord Hailes had ſent Johnſon a preſent of a curious little printed Poem, on repairing the Univerſity of Aberdeen, by David *Malloch*, which he thought would pleaſe Johnſon, as affording clear evidence that Mallet had appeared even as a literary character by the name of *Malloch*; his changing which to one of

ſofter

ſoſter found, had given Johnſon occaſion to introduce him into his Dictionary, under the article *Alias*. This piece was, it is ſuppoſed, one of Mallet's firſt eſſays. It is preſerved in his works with ſeveral variations. Johnſon having read aloud, from the beginning of it, where there were ſome common-place aſſertions as to the ſuperiority of ancient times;—"How falſe (ſaid he) is all this, to ſay that in ancient times learning was not a diſgrace to a peer as it is now. In ancient times a peer was as ignorant as any one elſe. He would have been angry to have it thought he could write his name. Men in ancient times dared to ſtand forth with a degree of ignorance, with which nobody would dare now to ſtand forth. I am always angry when I hear ancient times praiſed at the expence of modern times. There is now a great deal more learning in the world than there was formerly; for it is univerſally diffuſed. You have, perhaps, no man who knows as much Greek and Latin as Bentley; no man who knows as much mathematicks as Newton; but you have many more men who know Greek and Latin, and who know mathematicks. Mallet, I believe, never wrote a ſingle line of his projected life of the Duke of Marlborough. He groped for materials; and thought of it, till he had exhauſted his mind. Thus it ſometimes happens

pens that men entangle themſelves in their own ſchemes."

He allowed high praiſe to Thomſon as a poet; but when one of the company ſaid he was alſo a very good man, our moraliſt conteſted this with great warmth, accuſing him of groſs ſenſuality and licentiouſneſs of manners. "I was (ſays Mr. B.) very much afraid that in writing Thomſon's Life, Dr. Johnſon would have treated his private character with a ſtern ſeverity, but I was agreeably diſappointed; and I may claim a little merit in it, from my having been at pains to ſend him authentick accounts of the affectionate and generous conduct of that poet to his ſiſters; one of whom, the wife of Mr. Thomſon, ſchoolmaſter at Lanark, I knew, and was preſented by her with three of his letters, one of which Dr. Johnſon has inſerted in his Life."

"Thomſon, I think (ſaid the Doctor), had as much of the poet about him as moſt writers. Every thing appeared to him through the medium of his favourite purſuit. He could not have viewed two candles burning but with a poetical eye."—"Thomſon (he added at another time) had a true poetical genius, the power of viewing every thing in a poetical light. His fault is ſuch a cloud of words ſometimes, that the ſenſe can hardly peep through. Shiels, who

who compiled 'Cibber's Lives of the Poets' *, was one day ſitting with me. I took down Thomſon, and read aloud a large portion of him, and then aſked, is not this fine? Shiels having expreſſed the higheſt admiration, Well, Sir (ſaid I), I have omitted every other line."

Talking of the Iriſh clergy, he ſaid, Swift was a man of great parts, and the inſtrument of much good to his country.

One obſervation which Johnſon makes in Swift's life ſhould be often inculcated: "It may be juſtly ſuppoſed, that there was in his converſation what appears ſo frequently in his letters, an affectation of familiarity with the great, an ambition of momentary equality, ſought and enjoyed by the neglect of thoſe ceremonies which cuſtom has eſtabliſhed as the barriers between one order of ſociety and another. This tranſgreſſion of regularity was by himſelf and his admirers termed greatneſs of ſoul; but a great mind diſdains to hold any thing by courteſy, and therefore never uſurps what a lawful claimant may take away. He that encroaches on another's dignity puts himſelf in his power; he is either repelled with helpleſs indignity, or endured by clemency and condeſcenſion."

* See Page 375.

At

At another time he ſaid, "Swift has a higher reputation than he deſerves. His excellence is ſtrong ſenſe; for his humour, though very well, is not remarkably good. I doubt whether the 'Tale of the Tub' be his; for he never owned it, and it is much above his uſual manner." A perſon praiſed Swift's 'Conduct of the Allies;' Johnſon called it a performance of very little ability. "Surely, Sir (ſaid Dr. Douglas), you muſt allow it has ſtrong facts." —JOHNSON. "Why yes, Sir; but what is that to the merit of the compoſition? In the Seſſions-paper of the Old Bailey there are ſtrong facts. Houſebreaking is a ſtrong fact; robbery is a ſtrong fact; and murder is a *mighty* ſtrong fact: but is great praiſe due to the hiſtorian of thoſe ſtrong facts? No, Sir; Swift has told what he had to tell diſtinctly enough, but that is all. He had to count ten, and he has counted it right. Why, Sir, Tom Davies (who was preſent) might have written the conduct of the Allies.

He praiſed Delaney's 'Obſervations on Swift;' ſaid that his book and Lord Orrery's might both be true, though one viewed Swift more, and the other leſs favourably; and that between both we might have a complete notion of Swift.

'The Beggar's Opera,' and the common queſtion, whether it was pernicious in its effects, having been introduced, Johnſon ſaid, "As to this matter, which has been very much conteſted, I myſelf am of opinion, that more influence has been aſcribed to 'The Beggar's Opera' than it in reality ever had; for I do not believe that any man was ever made a rogue by being preſent at its repreſentation. At the ſame time I do not deny that it may have ſome influence by making the character of a rogue familiar, and in ſome degree pleaſing *.

Of Hoole's 'Cleonice' he ſaid, "The plot is well framed, the intricacy artful, the diſentanglement eaſy, the ſuſpenſe affecting, and the paſſionate parts properly interpoſed."

Buchanan, he ſaid, was a very fine poet; and was the firſt who complimented a lady, by aſcribing to her the different perfections of the heathen goddeſſes; but that Johnſton im-

* A very eminent phyſician, whoſe diſcernment is as acute and penetrating in judging of the human character as it is in his own profeſſion, remarked once, that a lively young man, fond of pleaſure, and without money, would hardly reſiſt a ſolicitation from his miſtreſs to go upon the highway, immediately after being preſent at the repreſentation of 'The Beggar's Opera.' An ingenious obſervation was made by Mr. Gibbon, that "The Beggar's Opera may, perhaps, have ſometimes increaſed the number of highwaymen; but it has had a beneficial effect in refining that claſs of men, making them leſs ferocious."

proved

proved upon this, by making his lady, at the ſame time, free from their defects.

He dwelt upon Buchanan's elegant verſes to Mary Queen of Scots, *Nympha Caledoniæ*, &c. and ſpoke with enthuſiaſm of the beauty of Latin verſe. "All the modern languages (ſaid he) cannot furniſh ſo melodious a line as

"*Formoſam reſonare doces Amarillida ſilvas.*"

"Buchanan (he obſerved) has fewer *centos* than any modern Latin poet. He not only has great knowledge of the Latin language, but was a great poetical genius. Both the Scaligers praiſe him."

Mrs. Thrale once diſputed with Johnſon on the merit of Prior. He attacked him powerfully; ſaid he wrote of love like a man who had never felt it: his love verſes were college verſes; and he repeated the ſong 'Alexis ſhunn'd his Fellow Swains," &c. in ſo ludicrous a manner, as to make all the company wonder how any one could have been pleaſed with ſuch fantaſtical ſtuff. Mrs. Thrale ſtood to her guns with great courage, in defence of amorous ditties, which Johnſon deſpiſed, till he at laſt ſilenced her by ſaying, "My dear Lady, talk no more of this. Nonſenſe can be defended but by nonſenſe."

A propo-

A propoſition which had been agitated, that monuments to eminent perſons ſhould, for the time to come, be erected in St. Paul's church as well as in Weſtminſter Abbey, was mentioned; and it was aſked, who ſhould be honoured by having his monument firſt erected there. Somebody ſuggeſted Pope.—JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, as Pope was a Roman Catholick, I would not have his to be firſt. I think Milton's rather ſhould have the precedence. I think more highly of him now than I did at twenty. There is more thinking in him and in Butler, than in any of our poets."

It was a lively ſaying of Dr. Johnſon to Miſs Hannah More, who had expreſſed a wonder that the poet who had written 'Paradiſe Loſt' ſhould write ſuch poor Sonnets: "Milton, Madam, was a genius that could cut a Coloſſus from a rock; but could not carve heads upon cherry-ſtones."

He cenſured Ruffhead's life of Pope; and ſaid, "he knew nothing of Pope, and nothing of poetry." He praiſed Dr. Joſeph Warton's Eſſay on Pope; but ſaid, he ſuppoſed we ſhould have no more of it, as the author had not been able to perſuade the world to think of Pope as he did.—BOSWELL. "Why, Sir, ſhould that prevent him from continuing his work? He is an ingenious Counſel, who has made the

the moſt of his cauſe; he is not obliged to gain it."—JOHNSON. "But, Sir, there is a difference when the cauſe is of a man's own making."

Mr. Boſwell told Johnſon, that Pope and Dryden had been thus diſtinguiſhed by a foreign writer: "Pope drives a handſome chariot, with a couple of neat trim nags; Dryden a coach, and ſix ſtately horſes."—*J.* "Why, Sir, the truth is, they both drive coaches and ſix; but Dryden's horſes are either galloping or ſtumbling: Pope's go at a ſteady even trot."

Johnſon ſaid, Pope's characters of men were admirably drawn, thoſe of women not ſo well. He repeated, in his forcible melodious manner, the concluding lines of the Dunciad.—While he was talking loudly in praiſe of thoſe lines, one of the company ventured to ſay, "Too fine for ſuch a poem: a poem on what?"—JOHNSON (with a diſdainful look). "Why, on *dunces*. It was worth while being a dunce then. Ah, Sir, hadſt *thou* lived in thoſe days! It is not worth while being a dunce now, when there are no wits." Bickerſtaff obſerved, as a peculiar circumſtance, that Pope's fame was higher when he was alive than it was then. Johnſon ſaid, his Paſtorals were poor things, though the verſification was fine. He told

told us, with high ſatisfaction, the anecdote of Pope's inquiring who was the author of his 'London,' and ſaying he will be ſoon *deterré*. He obſerved, that in Dryden's Poetry there were paſſages drawn from a profundity which Pope could never reach. He repeated ſome fine lines on love by the former (which I have now forgotten), and gave great applauſe to the character of Zimri. Goldſmith ſaid, that Pope's character of Addiſon ſhewed a deep knowledge of the human heart.

"In the year 1763 (ſays Mr. Boſwell, addreſſing himſelf to Dr. Johnſon), being at London, I was carried by Dr. John Blair, Prebendary of Weſtminſter, to dine at old Lord Bathurſt's; where we found the late Mr. Mallet, Sir James Porter, who had been Ambaſſador at Conſtantinople, the late Dr. Macaulay, and two or three more. The converſation turning on Mr. Pope, Lord Bathurſt told us, that 'The Eſſay on Man' was originally compoſed by Lord Bolingbroke in proſe, and that Mr. Pope did no more than put it into verſe: that he had read Lord Bolingbroke's manuſcript in his own hand-writing; and remembered well, that he was at a loſs whether moſt to admire the elegance of Lord Bolingbroke's proſe, or the beauty of Mr. Pope's verſe. When Lord Bathurſt told this, Mr. Mallet bade me attend,

attend, and remember this remarkable piece of information; as, by the courſe of nature, I might ſurvive his Lordſhip, and be a witneſs of his having ſaid ſo. The converſation was indeed too remarkable to be forgotten. A few days after, meeting with you, who were then alſo at London, you will remember that I mentioned to you what had paſſed on this ſubject, as I was much ſtruck with this anecdote. But what aſcertains my recollection of it beyond doubt is, that being accuſtomed to keep a Journal of what paſſed when I was at London, which I wrote out every evening, I find the particulars of the above information, juſt as I have now given them, diſtinctly marked; and am thence enabled to fix this converſation to have paſſed on Friday, the 22d of April, 1763.

Johnſon ſaid, "Depend upon it, Sir, this is too ſtrongly ſtated. Pope may have had from Bolingbroke the philoſophic ſtamina of his Eſſay; and admitting this to be true, Lord Bathurſt did not intentionally falſify. But the thing is not true in the latitude that Blair ſeems to imagine; we are ſure that the poetical imagery, which makes a great part of the poem, was Pope's own. It is amazing, Sir, what deviations there are from preciſe truth, in the account which is given of almoſt every thing. I

once told Mrs. Thrale, 'You have ſo little anxiety about truth, that you never tax your memory with the exact thing.' Now what is the uſe of the memory to truth, if one is careleſs of exactneſs? Lord Hailes's 'Annals of Scotland' are very exact; but they contain mere dry particulars. They are to be conſidered as a dictionary. You know ſuch things are there; and may be looked at when you pleaſe. Robertſon paints; but the misfortune is, you are ſure he does not know the people whom he paints; ſo you cannot ſuppoſe a likeneſs.—Characters ſhould never be given by an hiſtorian, unleſs he knew the people whom he deſcribes, or copies from thoſe who knew them."

Mr. Boſwell alſo relates (though not on the authority of his journal), that in the ſame converſation he took notice of a report which had been ſometimes propagated, that he did not underſtand Greek. Lord Bathurſt ſaid, that he knew that to be falſe: for that part of the Iliad was tranſlated by Mr. Pope in his houſe in the country; and that in the mornings when they aſſembled at breakfaſt, Mr. Pope uſed frequently to repeat, with great rapture, the Greek lines which he had been tranſlating, and then to give them his verſion of them, and to compare them together."

Mr.

Mr. Beauclerk one day repeated to Dr. Johnſon Pope's lines,

> 'Let modeſt Foſter, if he will, excel
> 'Ten metropolitans in preaching well.'

Then aſked the Doctor, "Why did Pope ſay this?"—JOHNSON. "Sir, he hoped it would vex ſomebody."

Talking of the minuteneſs with which people will often record the ſayings of eminent perſons, a ſtory was told, that when Pope was on a viſit to Spence at Oxford, as they looked from the window they ſaw a Gentleman Commoner, who was juſt come in from riding, amuſing himſelf with whipping at a poſt. Pope took occaſion to ſay, "That young gentleman ſeems to have little to do." Mr. Beauclerk obſerved, "Then, to be ſure, Spence turned round and wrote that down; and went on to ſay to Dr. Johnſon, 'Pope, Sir, would have ſaid the ſame of you, if he had ſeen you diſtilling."—JOHNSON. "Sir, if Pope had told me of my diſtilling, I would have told him of his grotto." Mr. Ramſay ſaid, "I am old enough to have been a contemporary of Pope. His poetry was highly admired in his life-time, more a great deal than after his death."—J. "Sir; it has not been leſs admired after his death; it has only not been as much talked

of; but that is owing to its being now more diſtant, and people having other writings to talk of. Virgil is leſs talked of than Pope, and Homer is leſs talked of than Virgil; but they are not leſs admired. We muſt read what the world reads at the moment. It has been maintained that this ſuperfœtation, this teeming of the preſs in modern times is prejudicial to good literature, becauſe it obliges us to read ſo much of what is of inferior value, in order to be in the faſhion; ſo that better works are neglected for want of time, becauſe a man will have more gratification of his vanity in converſation from having read modern books, than from having read the beſt works of antiquity. But it muſt be conſidered, that we have now more knowledge generally diffuſed; all our ladies read now, which is a great extenſion. Modern writers are the moons of literature; they ſhine with reflected light, with light borrowed from the ancients. Greece appears to me to be the fountain of knowledge; Rome of elegance." — RAMSAY. "I ſuppoſe Homer's 'Iliad' to be a collection of pieces which had been written before his time. I ſhould like to ſee a tranſlation of it in poetical proſe, like the book of Ruth or Job."—ROBERTSON. "Would you, Dr. Johnſon, who are maſter of the Engliſh language, but try your hand upon a part

of

of it."—*J.* "Sir, you could not read it without the pleaſure of verſe."

On another occaſion, Johnſon ſaid, "Sir, a thouſand years may elapſe before there ſhall appear another man with a power of verſification equal to that of Pope." That power muſt undoubtedly be allowed its due ſhare in enhancing the value of his captivating compoſition.

He ſaid, that the diſpute as to the comparative excellence of Homer or Virgil was inaccurate. "We muſt conſider (ſaid he) whether Homer was not the greateſt poet, though Virgil may have produced the fineſt poem. Virgil was indebted to Homer for the whole invention of the ſtructure of an epic poem, and for many of his beauties."

Mr. Boſwell one day found fault with Foote for indulging his talent of ridicule at the expence of his viſitors, which he colloquially termed making fools of his company.—JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, when you go to ſee Foote, you do not go to ſee a ſaint; you go to ſee a man who will be entertained at your houſe, and then bring you on a public ſtage; who will entertain you at his houſe for the very purpoſe of bringing you on a public ſtage. Sir, he does not make fools of his company; they whom he expoſes are fools already: he only brings them into action."—

Boswell. "Foote has a great deal of humour?"—*J.* "Yes, Sir."—*B.* "He has a ſingular talent of exhibiting character."—*J.* "Sir, it is not a talent; it is a vice; it is what others abſtain from. It is not comedy, which exhibits the character of a ſpecies, as that of a miſer gathered from many miſers: it is farce, which exhibits individuals."—*B.* "Did not he think of exhibiting you, Sir?"—*J.* "Sir, fear reſtrained him; he knew I would have broken his bones. I would have ſaved him the trouble of cutting off a leg; I would not have left him a leg to cut off?"—*B.* "Pray, Sir, is not Foote an infidel?"—*J.* "I do not know, Sir, that the fellow is an infidel; but if he be an infidel, he is an infidel as a dog is an infidel; that is to ſay, he has never thought upon the ſubject."—*B.* "I ſuppoſe, Sir, he has thought ſuperficially, and ſeized the firſt notions which occurred to his mind."—*J.* "Why then, Sir, ſtill he is like a dog, that ſnatches the piece next him. Did you never obſerve that dogs have not the power of comparing? A dog will take a ſmall bit of meat as readily as a large, when both are before him."

Johnſon ſaid, "Foote was not a good mimic." One of the company added, "A merry Andrew, a buffoon."—*J.* "But he has wit too, and is not deficient in ideas, or in fertility and variety of imagery, and not empty of reading; he has

has knowledge enough to fill up his part. One ſpecies of wit he has in an eminent degree, that of eſcape. You drive him into a corner with both hands; but he's gone, Sir, when you think you have got him, like an animal that jumps over your head. Then he has a great range for wit; he never lets truth ſtand between him and a jeſt, and he is ſometimes mighty coarſe. Garrick is under many reſtraints from which Foote is free."—WILKES. "Garrick's wit is more like Lord Cheſterfield's."—*Y.* "The firſt time I was in company with Foote was at Fitzherbert's. Having no good opinion of the fellow, I was reſolved not to be pleaſed; and it is very difficult to pleaſe a man againſt his will. I went on eating my dinner pretty ſullenly, affecting not to mind him; but the dog was ſo very comical, that I was obliged to lay down my knife and fork, throw myſelf back upon my chair, and fairly laugh it out. No, Sir, he was irreſiſtible. He upon one occaſion experienced, in an extraordinary degree, the efficacy of his powers of entertaining. Amongſt the many and various modes which he tried of getting money, he became a partner with a ſmall-beer brewer, and he was to have a ſhare of the profits for procuring cuſtomers amongſt his numerous acquaintance.—Fitzherbert was one who took his ſmall-beer; but

but it was ſo bad that the ſervants reſolved not to drink it. They were at ſome loſs how to notify their reſolution, being afraid of offending their maſter, who they knew liked Foote much as a companion. At laſt they fixed upon a little black boy, who was rather a favourite, to be their deputy, and deliver their remonſtrance; and having inveſted him with the whole authority of the kitchen, he was to inform Mr. Fitzherbert, upon a certain day, that they would drink Foote's ſmall-beer no longer. On that day Foote happened to dine at Fitzherbert's, and this boy ſerved at table; he was ſo delighted with Foote's ſtories, and merriment, and grimace, that when he went down ſtairs he told them, 'This is the fineſt man I have ever ſeen. I will not deliver your meſſage. I will drink his ſmall-beer." Somebody obſerved that Garrick could not have done this.—"WILKES. "Garrick would have made the ſmall-beer ſtill ſmaller. He is now leaving the ſtage; but he will play *Scrub* all his life." I knew (ſays Mr. Boſwell) that Johnſon would let nobody attack Garrick but himſelf, as Garrick once ſaid to me, and I had heard him praiſe his liberality; ſo to bring out his commendation of his celebrated pupil, I ſaid, loudly, "I have heard Garrick is liberal."—*J.* "Yes, Sir, I know that Garrick has given away more money than any

any man in England that I am acquainted with, and that not from oſtentatious views. Garrick was very poor when he began life; ſo when he came to have money, he probably was very unſkilful in giving away, and ſaved when he ſhould not. But Garrick began to be liberal as ſoon as he could; and I am of opinion, the reputation of avarice which he has had, has been very lucky for him; and prevented his having many enemies. You deſpiſe a man for avarice, but do not hate him. Garrick might have been much better attacked for living with more ſplendor than is ſuitable to a player; if they had had the wit to have aſſaulted him in that quarter, they might have galled him more. But they have kept clamouring about his avarice, which has reſcued him from much obloquy and envy."

Mrs. Thrale praiſed Garrick's talent for light gay poetry; and, as a ſpecimen, repeated his ſong in 'Florizel and Perdita,' and dwelt with peculiar pleaſure on this line:

"I'd ſmile with the ſimple, and feed with the poor."

JOHNSON. "Nay, my dear lady, this will never do. Poor David! Smile with the ſimple?—What folly is that. And who would feed with the poor that can help it? No, no; let me ſmile with the wiſe, and feed with the rich."—

Mr.

Mr. Boſwell ſays, "I repeated this ſally to Garrick, and wondered to find his ſenſibility as a writer not a little irritated by it. To ſooth him, I obſerved, that Johnſon ſpared none of us; and I quoted the paſſage in Horace, in which he compares one who attacks his friends for the ſake of a laugh, to a puſhing ox that is marked by a bunch of hay put upon his horns; '*fœnum habet in cornu.*" "Aye (ſaid Garrick vehemently), he has a whole *mow* of it."

Soon after the publication of the Dictionary, Garrick being aſked by Johnſon what people ſaid of it, told him, that among other animadverſions, it was objected that he cited authorities which were beneath the dignity of ſuch a work, and mentioned Richardſon. "Nay (ſaid Johnſon), I have done worſe than that: I have cited *thee*, David."

Johnſon on ſome occaſion obſerved, "Garrick's converſation is gay and groteſque. It is a diſh of all ſorts, but all good things. There is no ſolid meat in it; there is a want of ſentiment in it. Not but that he has ſentiment ſometimes, and ſentiment too very powerful and very pleaſing; but it has not its full proportion in his converſation."

Mr. B. complained that he had not mentioned Garrick in his Preface to Shakſpeare; and aſked him if he did not admire him.—*J.* "Yes, as

as 'a poor player, who frets and ſtruts his hour upon the ſtage'—as a ſhadow."—*B.* "But has he not brought Shakeſpeare into notice?"—*J.* "Sir, to allow that, would be to lampoon the age. Many of Shakſpeare's plays are the worſe for being acted. Macbeth, for inſtance."—*B.* "What, Sir, is nothing gained by decoration and action? Indeed, I do wiſh that you had mentioned Garrick."—*J.* "My dear Sir, had I mentioned him, I muſt have mentioned many more: Mrs. Pritchard, Mrs. Cibber—nay, and Mr. Cibber too; he too altered Shakſpeare." *B.* "You have read his apology, Sir?"—*J.* "Yes, it is very entertaining. But as for Cibber himſelf, taking from his converſation all that he ought not to have ſaid, he was a poor creature. I remember when he brought me one of his Odes to have my opinion of it, I could not bear ſuch nonſenſe, and would not let him read it to the end; ſo little reſpect had I for *that great man* (laughing)! Yet I remember Richardſon wondering that I could treat him with familiarity."

"Garrick (he obſerved) does not play the part of Archer in 'The Beaux Stratagem' well. The gentleman ſhould break out through the footman, which is not the caſe as he does it."

Mr.

Mr. Boſwell, dining with Johnſon at Mr. Beauclerk's one day with Sir Joſhua Reynolds, Mr. Jones (afterwards Sir William), Mr. Langton, Mr. Steevens, Mr. Paradiſe, and Dr. Higgins, mentioned that Mr. Wilkes had attacked Garrick to him, as a man who had no friend. JOHNSON. "I believe he is right, Sir. Οι φιλοι ου φιλοι.—He has friends, but no friend. Garrick was ſo diffuſed, he had no man to whom he wiſhed to unboſom himſelf. He found people always ready to applaud him, and that always for the ſame thing; ſo he ſaw life with great uniformity."—BOSWELL. "Garrick did not need a friend, as he got from every body all he wanted. What is a friend? One who ſupports you, and comforts you, while others do not. Friendſhip, you know, Sir, is the cordial drop, 'to make the nauſeous draught of life go down;' but if the draught be not nauſeous, if it be all ſweet, there is no occaſion for that drop."—JOHNSON. "Many men would not be content to live ſo. I hope I ſhould not. They would wiſh to have an intimate friend, with whom they might compare minds, and cheriſh private virtues." One of the company mentioned Lord Cheſterfield, as a man who had no friend.—*J.* "There were more materials to make friendſhip in Garrick, had he not been ſo diffuſed."—*B.* "Garrick was pure gold, but beat

beat out to thin leaf. Lord Cheſterfield was tinſel."—*J.* "Garrick was a very good man, the cheerfulleſt man of his age; a decent liver in a profeſſion which is ſuppoſed to give indulgence to licentiouſneſs; and a man who gave away freely money acquired by himſelf. He began the world with a great hunger for money; the ſon of a half-pay officer, bred in a family whoſe ſtudy was to make four-pence do as much as others made four-pence-half-penny do; but, when he had got money, he was very liberal." Mr. Boſwell animadverted on his eulogy on Garrick, in his 'Lives of the Poets.'—"You ſay, Sir, his death eclipſed the gaiety of nations."—*J.* "I could not have ſaid more nor leſs. It is the truth; *eclipſed*, not *extinguiſhed*; and his death *did* eclipſe; it was like a ſtorm."—*B.* "But why nations? Did his gaiety extend farther than his own nation?"—*J.* "Why, Sir, ſome exaggeration muſt be allowed. Beſides, nations may be ſaid if we allow the Scotch to be a nation, and to have gaiety, which they have not. *You* are an exception though. Come, gentlemen, let us candidly admit that there is one Scotchman who is cheerful."—BEAUCLERK. "But he is a very unnatural Scotchman." I however (ſays Mr. B.) continued to think the compliment to Garrick hyperbolically untrue. His acting had ceaſed ſome time

time before his death; at any rate he had acted in Ireland but a ſhort time, at an early period of his life, and never in Scotland. I objected alſo to what appears an anticlimax of praiſe, when contraſted with the preceding pangeryic—'and diminiſhed the public ſtock of harmleſs pleaſure!' "Is not *harmleſs pleaſure* very tame!"—*J.* "Nay, Sir, harmleſs pleaſure is the higheſt praiſe. Pleaſure is a word of dubious import; pleaſure is in general dangerous and pernicious to virtue; to be able therefore to furniſh pleaſure that is harmleſs, pleaſure pure and unalloyed, is as great a power as man can poſſeſs." This was, perhaps, as ingenious a defence as could be made: ſtill, however, (ſays Mr. B.) I was not ſatisfied.

His friend Garrick was ſo buſy in conducting the drama, that they could not have ſo much intercourſe as Mr. Garrick uſed to profeſs an anxious wiſh that there ſhould be. There might indeed be ſomething in the contemptuous ſeverity as to the merit of acting, which his old preceptor nouriſhed in himſelf, that would mortify Garrick after the great applauſe which he received from the audience. For though Johnſon ſaid of him, "Sir, a man who has a nation to admire him every night, may well be expected to be ſomewhat elated;" yet he would treat theatrical matters with a ludi-

crous

trous ſlight. He ſaid one evening, " I met David coming off the ſtage, dreſt in a woman's riding-hood, when he acted in ' The Wonder ;' I came full upon him, and I believe he was not pleaſed."

Sir Joſhua Reynolds obſerved with great truth, that Johnſon conſidered Garrick to be as it were his *property*. He would allow no man either to blame or to praiſe Garrick in his preſence without contradicting him.

Goldſmith in his diverting ſimplicity complained one day, in a mixed company, of Lord Camden. " I met him (ſaid he) at Lord Clare's houſe in the country, and he took no more notice of me than if I had been an ordinary man." The company having laughed heartily, Johnſon ſtood forth in defence of his friend. " Nay, Gentlemen (ſaid he), Dr. Goldſmith is in the right. A nobleman ought to have made up to ſuch a man as Goldſmith; and I think it is much againſt Lord Camden that he neglected him."

Nor could he patiently endure to hear that ſuch reſpect as he thought due only to higher intellectual qualities, ſhould be beſtowed on men of ſlighter, though perhaps more amuſing talents. I told him (ſays Mr. B.) that one morning, when I went to breakfaſt with Garrick, who was very vain of his intimacy with

Lord Camden, he accoſted me thus:—"Pray now, did you?—did you meet a little lawyer turning the corner, eh!"—"No, Sir (ſaid I); pray what do you mean by the queſtion?"—"Why (replied Garrick, with an affected indifference, yet as if ſtanding on tip-toe), Lord Camden has this moment left me. We have had a long walk together."—*J.* "Well, Sir, Garrick talked very properly. Lord Camden *was* a little lawyer to be aſſociating ſo familiarly with a player."

Mrs. Montagu, a lady diſtinguiſhed for having written an Eſſay on Shakſpeare, being mentioned, Sir Joſhua Reynolds ſaid, "I think that eſſay does her honour."—JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, it does *her* honour; but it would do nobody elſe honour. I have, indeed, not read it all. But when I take up the end of a web, and find it packthread, I do not expect, by looking further, to find embroidery. Sir, I will venture to ſay, there is not once ſentence of true criticiſm in her book."—GARRICK. "But, Sir, ſurely it ſhews how much a certain French writer has miſtaken Shakſpeare, which nobody elſe has done."—*J.* "Sir, nobody elſe has thought it worth while; and what merit is there in that? You may as well praiſe a ſchoolmaſter for whipping a boy who has conſtrued ill. No, Sir, there is no real

criticiſm in it; none ſhewing the beauty of thought, as formed on the workings of the human heart." *

He ſaid that he had given Mrs. Montagu a catalogue of all Daniel Defoe's works of imagination; moſt, if not all of which, as well as of his other works, he enumerated; allowing a conſiderable ſhare of merit to a man who, bred a tradeſman, had written ſo variouſly and ſo well. Indeed his 'Robinſon Cruſoe' is enough of itſelf to eſtabliſh his reputation.

It always appeared, that he eſtimated the compoſitions of Richardſon too highly, and that he had an unreaſonable prejudice againſt Fielding. In comparing thoſe two writers, he uſed this expreſſion; "that there was as great a difference between them as between a man who knew how a watch was made, and a man who could tell the hour by looking on the dial-plate." This was a ſhort and figurative ſtate

* Mr. Boſwell ſays, he conſiders it as a piece of the ſecondary or comparative ſpecies of criticiſm, and not of that profound ſpecies which alone Dr. Johnſon would allow to be "real criticiſm." It is beſides clearly and elegantly expreſſed, and has done effectually what it profeſſed to do, namely vindicated Shakſpeare from the miſrepreſentations of the French writer; and conſidering how many young people were miſled by his witty, though falſe obſervations, Mrs. Montagu's Eſſay was of ſervice to Shakſpeare with a certain claſs of readers, and is, therefore, entitled to praiſe. Johnſon, I am aſſured, allowed the merit which I have ſtated, ſaying (with reference to the Frenchman), "it is concluſive *ad hominem*."

of his diſtinction between drawing characters of nature and characters only of manners. "But (ſays Mr. B.) I cannot help being of opinion, that the neat watches of Fielding are as well conſtructed as the large clocks of Richardſon, and that his dial plates are brighter. Fielding's characters, though they do not expand themſelves ſo widely in diſſertation, are as juſt pictures of human nature, and I will venture to ſay, have more ſtriking features and nicer touches of the pencil; and though Johnſon uſed to quote with approbation a ſaying of Richardſon's, 'that the virtues of Fielding's heroes were the vices of a truly good man,' I will venture to add, that the moral tendency of Fielding's writings, though it does not encourage a ſtrained and rarely poſſible virtue, is ever favourable to honour and honeſty, and cheriſhes the benevolent and generous affections. He, who is as good as Fielding would make him, is an amiable member of ſociety, and may be led on by more regulated inſtructors to a high ſtate of ethical perfection."

Johnſon at another time ſaid, "Sir Francis Wronghead is a character of manners, though drawn with great humour." He then repeated very happily all Sir Francis's credulous account to Manly of his being with "the great man," and ſecuring a place. Being aſked if 'The Suſpicious

Suſpicious Huſband' did not furniſh a well drawn character, that of Ranger, Johnſon ſaid, "No, Sir; Ranger is juſt a rake, a mere rake, and a lively young fellow, but no *character*."

Richardſon had little converſation, except about his own works, of which Sir Joſhua Reynolds ſaid he was always willing to talk, and glad to have them introduced *. Johnſon, when he carried Mr. Langton to ſee him, profeſſed that he could bring him out into converſation, and uſed this alluſive expreſſion, "Sir, I can make him *rear*;" but he failed. for in that interview Richardſon ſaid little elſe than that there lay in the room a tranſlation into German of his 'Clariſſa.'

Talking of ſome of the modern plays, Johnſon ſaid, 'Falſe Delicacy' was totally void of cha-

* One day at his country houſe at Northend, where a large company was aſſembled at dinner, a gentleman who was juſt returned from Paris, willing to pleaſe Mr. Richardſon, mentioned to him a very flattering circumſtance,—that he had ſeen his 'Clariſſa' lying on the King's brother's table. Richardſon, obſerving that part of the company were engaged in talking to each other, affected then not to attend to it; but by and by, when there was a general ſilence, and he thought that the flattery might be fully heard, he addreſſed himſelf to the gentleman, "I think, Sir, you were ſaying ſomething about—" pauſing in a high flutter of expectation. The gentleman, provoked at his inordinate vanity, reſolved not to indulge it, and with an exquiſitely ſly air of indifference anſwered, "A mere trifle, Sir, not worth repeating." The mortification of Richardſon was viſible, and he did not ſpeak ten words more the whole day.

racter. He praiſed Goldſmith's 'Good Natured Man;' ſaid it was the beſt comedy that had appeared ſince the 'Provoked Huſband,' and that there had not been of late any ſuch character exhibited on the ſtage as that of Croaker. Mr. B. obſerved, that it was the Suſpirius of Johnſon's Rambler. He ſaid, Goldſmith had owned he had borrowed it from thence. "Sir (continued he), there is all the difference in the world between characters of nature and characters of manners; and *there* is the difference between the characters of Fielding and thoſe of Richardſon. Characters of manners are very entertaining; but they are to be underſtood by a more ſuperficial obſerver than characters of nature, where a man muſt dive into the receſſes of the human heart."

Of Dr. Goldſmith he ſaid, "No man was more fooliſh when he had not a pen in his hand, nor more wiſe when he had."

Of Goldſmith's 'Traveller,' he ſaid, "There has not been ſo fine a poem ſince Pope's time."

At another time, Goldſmith being mentioned, "It is amazing (ſaid Johnſon) how little Goldſmith knows. He ſeldom comes where he is not more ignorant than any one elſe."—SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS. "Yet there is no man whoſe

whoſe company is more liked."—JOHNSON. "To be ſure, Sir. When people find a man of the moſt diſtinguiſhed abilities as a writer, their inferior while he is with them, it muſt be highly gratifying to them. What Goldſmith comically ſays of himſelf is very true,—he always gets the better when he argues alone; meaning, that he is maſter of a ſubject in his ſtudy, and can write well upon it; but when he comes into company, he grows confuſed, and unable to talk. Take him as a poet, his 'Traveller' is a very fine performance; aye, and ſo is his 'Deſerted Village,' were it not ſometimes too much the echo of his 'Traveller.' Whether, indeed, we take him as a poet,—as a comick writer,—or as an hiſtorian, he ſtands in the firſt claſs."—BOSWELL. "An hiſtorian! My dear, Sir, you ſurely will not rank his compilation of the Roman Hiſtory with the works of other hiſtorians of this age?"—*J.* "Why, who are before him?"—*B.* "Hume, Robertſon, Lord Lyttleton."—*J.* (His antipathy to the Scotch beginning to riſe), "I have not read Hume; but doubtleſs Goldſmith's Hiſtory is better than the *verbiage* of Robertſon, or the foppery of Dalrymple."—*B.* "Will you not admit the ſuperiority of Robertſon, in whoſe Hiſtory we find ſuch penetration—ſuch painting?"—*J.* "Sir, you muſt conſider how that

penetration and that painting are employed. It is not hiſtory, it is imagination. He who deſcribes what he never ſaw draws from fancy. Robertſon paints minds as Sir Joſhua paints faces in a hiſtory-piece; he imagines an heroic countenance. You muſt look upon Robertſon's work as romance, and try it by that ſtandard. Hiſtory it is not. Beſides, Sir, it is the great excellence of a writer to put into his book as much as his book will hold. Goldſmith has done this in his Hiſtory. Now Robertſon might have put twice as much into his book. Robertſon is like a man who has packed gold in wool; the wool takes up more room than the gold. No, Sir; I always thought Robertſon would be cruſhed by his own weight,—would be buried under his own ornaments. Goldſmith tells you ſhortly all you want to know; Robertſon detains you a great deal too long. No man will read Robertſon's cumbrous detail a ſecond time; but Goldſmith's plain narrative will pleaſe again and again. I would ſay to Robertſon what an old tutor of a college ſaid to one of his pupils: 'Read over your compoſitions, and wherever you meet with a paſſage which you think is particularly fine, ſtrike it out.' Goldſmith's Abridgement is better than that of Lucius Florus or Eutropius; and I will venture to ſay, that

that if you compare him with Vertot, in the ſame places of the Roman Hiſtory, you will find that he excels Vertot. Sir, he has the art of compiling, and of ſaying every think he has to ſay in a pleaſing manner. He is now writing a Natural Hiſtory, and will make it as entertaining as a Perſian Tale."

Dr. Goldſmith's play, 'She Stoops to Conquer,' being mentioned, Johnſon ſaid, "I know of no comedy for many years that has ſo much exhilarated an audience, that has anſwered ſo much the great end of comedy, making an audience merry."

Johnſon obſerved, that it was long before Goldſmith's merit came to be acknowledged.—That he once complained to him, in ludicrous terms of diſtreſs, "Whenever I write any thing, the public *make a point* to know nothing about it;" but that his 'Traveller' brought him into high reputation.—MR. LANGTON. "There is not one bad line in that poem; not one of Dryden's careleſs verſes."—SIR JOSHUA. "I was glad to hear Charles Fox ſay it was one of the fineſt poems in the Engliſh language."—LANGTON. "Why was you glad? You ſurely had no doubt of this before."—JOHNSON. "No; the merit of 'The Traveller' is ſo well eſtabliſhed, that Mr. Fox's praiſe cannot augment it, nor his cenſure diminiſh it."—SIR JOSHUA. "But

"But his friends may ſuſpect they had a too great partiality for him."—*J.* "Nay, Sir, the partiality of his friends was always againſt him. It was with difficulty we could give him a hearing. Goldſmith had no ſettled notions upon any ſubject; ſo he talked always at random. It ſeemed to be his intention to blurt out whatever was in his mind, and ſee what would become of it. He was angry too when catched in an abſurdity; but it did not prevent him from falling into another the next minute. I remember Chamier, after talking with him for ſome time, ſaid, 'Well, I do believe he wrote this poem himſelf; and, let me tell you, that is believing a great deal.' Chamier once aſked him what he meant by *ſlow*, the laſt word in the firſt line of 'The Traveller,'

'Remote, unfriended, melancholy, ſlow,'

Did he mean tardineſs of locomotion? Goldſmith, who would ſay ſomething without conſideration, anſwered, 'Yes.' I was ſitting by, and ſaid, 'No, Sir; you do not mean tardineſs of locomotion; you mean that ſluggiſhneſs of mind which comes upon a man in ſolitude.' Chamier believed then that I had written the line, as much as if he had ſeen me write it. Goldſmith, however, was a man who, whatever he wrote, did it better than any other man could

could do. He deſerved a place in Weſtminſter-Abbey, and every year he lived would have deſerved it better. He had, indeed, been at no pains to fill his mind with knowledge. He tranſplanted it from one place to another; and it did not ſettle in his mind; ſo he could not tell what was in his own books."

"Goldſmith (he ſaid) referred every thing to vanity; his virtues and his vices too were from that motive. He was not a ſocial man. He never exchanged mind with you."

Goldſmith had long a viſionary project, that ſome time or other, when his circumſtances ſhould be eaſier, he would go to Aleppo, in order to acquire a knowledge, as far as might be, of any arts peculiar to the Eaſt, and introduce them into Britain. When this was talked of in Dr. Johnſon's company, he ſaid, "Of all men Goldſmith is the moſt unfit to go out upon ſuch an enquiry; for he is utterly ignorant of ſuch arts as we already poſſeſs, and conſequently could not know what would be acceſſions to our preſent ſtock of mechanical knowledge. Sir, he would bring home a grinding-barrow, which you ſee in every ſtreet in London, and think that he had furniſhed a wonderful improvement."

Of Goldſmith he on ſome other occaſion ſaid, "He was not an agreeable companion, for he talked

talked always for fame. A man who does ſo never can be pleaſing. The man who talks to unburden his mind is the man to delight you. An eminent friend of ours is not ſo agreeable as the variety of his knowledge would otherwiſe make him, becauſe he talks partly from oſtentation. Goldſmith too was very envious." Mr. B. defended him, by obſerving that he owned it frankly upon all occaſions.—*J.* "Sir, you are enforcing the charge. He had ſo much envy that he could not conceal it. He was ſo full of it that he overflowed. He talked of it to be ſure often enough. Now, Sir, what a man avows, he is not aſhamed to think; though many a man thinks what he is aſhamed to avow. We are all envious naturally; but by checking envy we get the better of it. So we are all thieves naturally; a child always tries to get at what it wants the neareſt way; by good inſtruction and good habits this is cured, till a man has not even an inclination to ſeize what is another's; has no ſtruggle with himſelf about it."

He ſaid, "Goldſmith's Life of Parnell is poor; not that it is poorly written, but that he had poor materials; for nobody can write the life of a man, but thoſe who have ate and drunk and lived in ſocial intercourſe with him."

Dr. Goldſmith, upon occaſion of Mrs. Lennox's bringing out a play, ſaid to Dr. Johnſon at the Club, that a perſon had adviſed him to go and hiſs it, becauſe ſhe had attacked Shakſpeare in her book called 'Shakſpeare Illuſtrated.' JOHNSON. "And did not you tell him that he was a raſcal?"—GOLDSMTH. "No, Sir, I did not. Perhaps he might not mean what he ſaid."—JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, if he lied it is a different thing."—Colman ſlily ſaid (but it is believed Dr. Johnſon did not hear him), "Then the proper expreſſion ſhould have been,—Sir, if you don't lie, you're a raſcal."

Goldſmith could ſometimes take adventurous liberties with Johnſon, and eſcape unpuniſhed. When he once talked of a project for having a third theatre in London, ſolely for the exhibition of new plays, in order to deliver authors from the ſuppoſed tyranny of managers, Johnſon treated it ſlightingly; upon which Goldſmith ſaid, "Aye, aye, this may be nothing to you, who can now ſhelter yourſelf behind the corner of a penſion;" and Johnſon bore this with good humour.

Goldſmith, upon being viſited by Johnſon one day in the Temple, ſaid to him with a little jealouſy of the appearance of his accommodation,

modation, "I ſhall ſoon be in better chambers than theſe." Johnſon at the ſame time checked him and paid him a handſome compliment, implying that a man of his talents ſhould be above attention to ſuch diſtinctions. "Nay, Sir (ſaid he), never mind that; *nil te quæſiveris extra.*"

FINIS.

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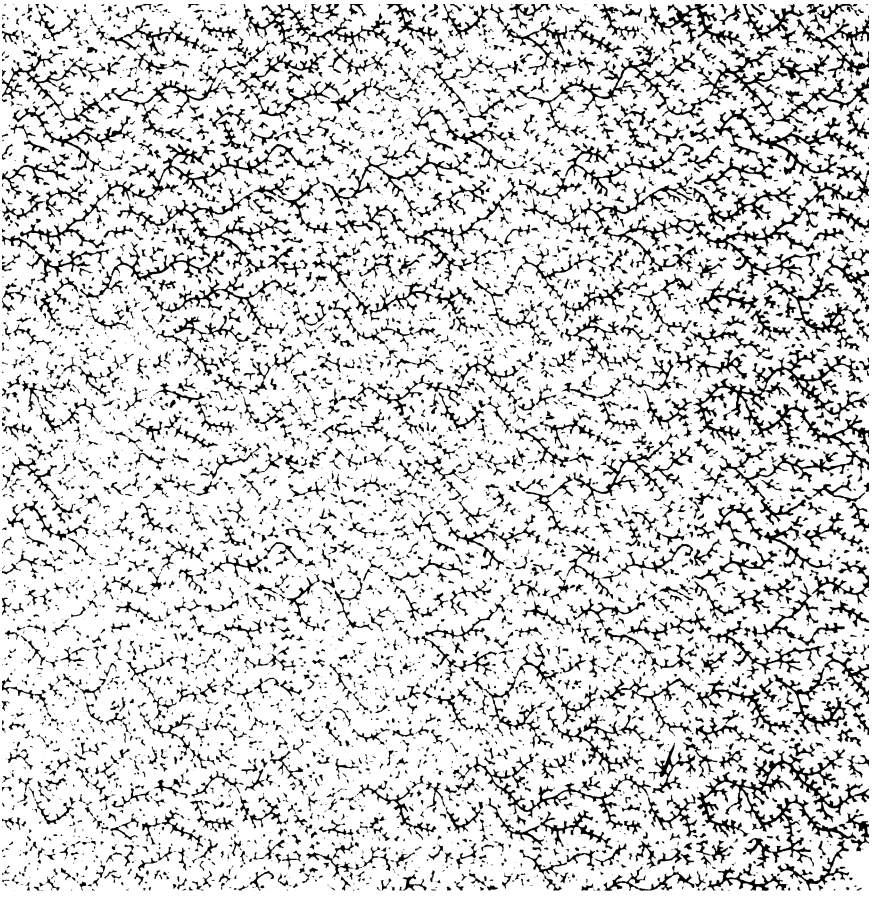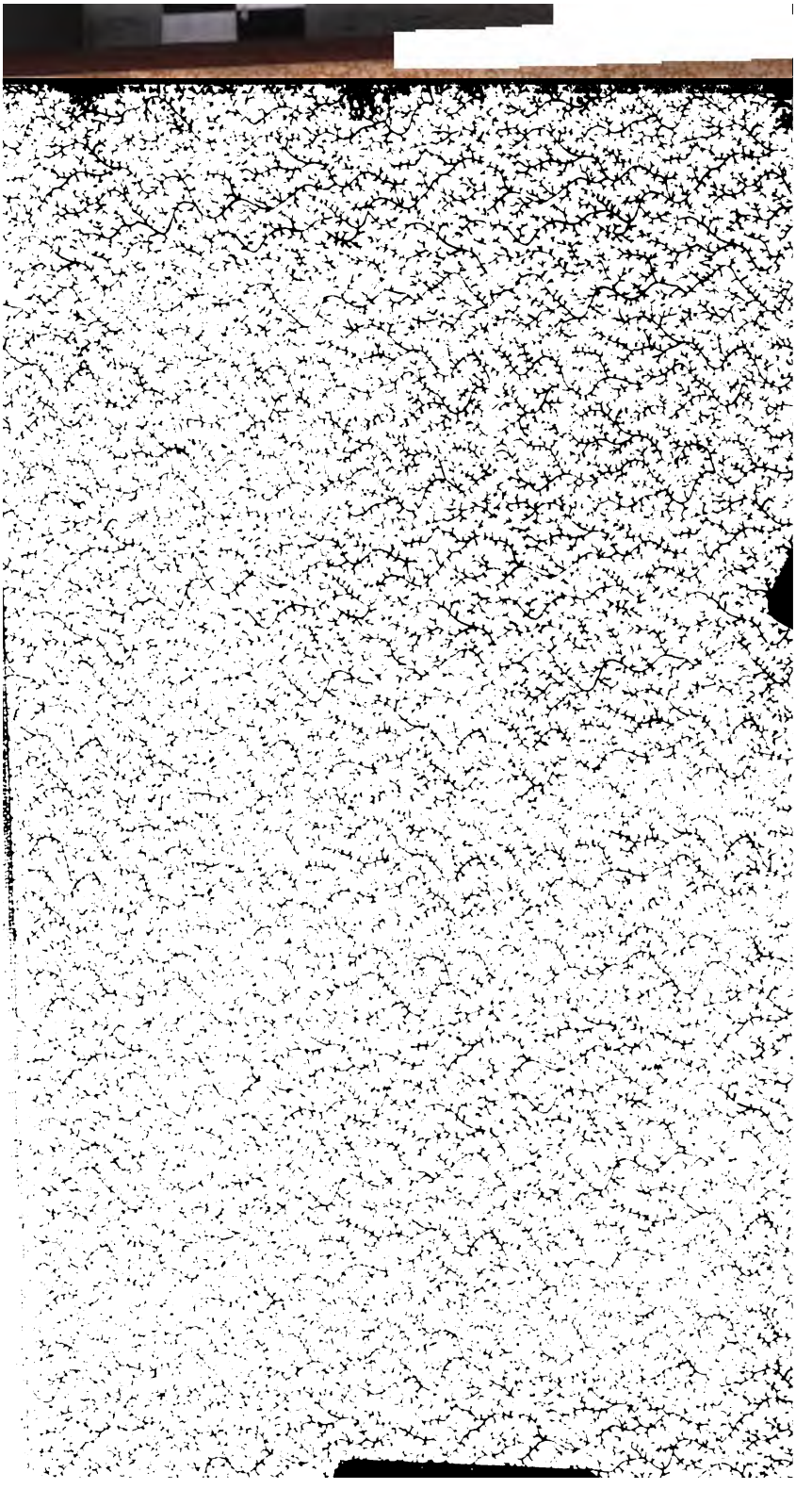
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